A.D.WOODHOUSE

GREAT FRENCH PREACHERS

Advent and Christmas

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

GREAT FRENCH PREACHERS

I

Lent and Holy Week

SERMONS BY BOURDALOUE, DE LA BOISSIÈRE, A. VINET, AND BOSSUET.

Translated and Edited by the Rev. CHARLES HYDE BROOKE.
Fcap 8vo, Cloth gilt. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

SOME PRESS OPINIONS.

"Sermons and good literature are not always the same thing. As models of matter and style there are few sermons which approach the orations of the famous old French preachers. By the thoroughly good translation now made, a goodly number of these great and moving discourses are made available for English readers. The first volume . . . is in every way excellent."—*St. James's Gazette.*

"Among the better books of the kind, of which Lent sees so many published, is the Rev. C. H. Brooke's volume of translations from 'Great French Preachers.' The translation reads easily and scholarlike."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"A welcome may be accorded to Mr. Grant Richards's series of 'Great French Preachers.' The translator, Mr. Charles Hyde Brooke, has done his work very well, and there is nothing to complain of in this respect."—*Athenæum.*

"Mr. Brooke should have done a useful service in translating these sermons. He puts us in mind of what we are apt to ignore—the great possibilities of the sermon as a form of literature. For the student of rhetoric, these sermons are valuable. Mr. Brooke recommends the subject by his excellent translations. The ordinary translation reduces the original to its lowest terms. Mr. Brooke reinforces his work by apposite quotations from English literature."—*The Week's Survey.*

"It is an excellent idea to give English readers an opportunity of becoming acquainted with those preachers who have given renown to the French pulpit. By an effective translation and in other ways, Mr. Brooke lays English readers under obligation."—*The Literary World.*

"This series promises to be of great value."—*Liverpool Mercury.*

"Such a publication possesses deep value, and its preparation has been marked by the greatest care, and is on admirable lines."—*Bristol Daily Mercury.*

"That a selection of classic sermons by Great French Preachers should be published in England is admirable, and the project deserves encouragement. In the present volume the Rev. Charles Hyde Brooke has accomplished the translator's task with marked success, and the fruits of his labour are available to all."—*Dundee Advertiser.*

LONDON: GRANT RICHARDS.

B666

GREAT FRENCH PREACHERS

II

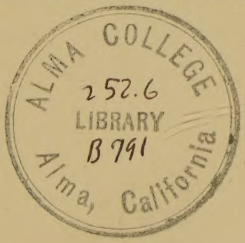
Advent and Christmas

SERMONS BY BOURDALOUE AND BOSSUET

TRANSLATED AND EDITED

BY

THE REV. CHARLES HYDE BROOKE



LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
1904

1700

PRINTED BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

RESPECTFULLY AND MOST GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED

BY THE TRANSLATOR TO THE

BELOVED AND ILLUSTRIOUS MEMORY

OF

MANDELL CREIGHTON

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON

WHO VENTURED TO EXPRESS IN WRITING HIS HEARTY

APPRECIATION OF THE WORK OF AN

UNKNOWN AUTHOR

FROM

BISHOP MANDELL CREIGHTON

TO THE TRANSLATOR

"I THINK THAT THE INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH READERS OF SUCH EXAMPLES OF NOBLE ORATORY AND LOFTY TEACHING IS LIKELY TO BE VERY USEFUL."

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	11
I.	DEATH	17
II.	DIVINE JUDGMENT	59
III.	EVERLASTING PAIN	119
IV.	EVERLASTING HAPPINESS	197
V.	THE NATIVITY	267

The dates of the birth and death of the Great Preachers are given in Vol. I. for Lent, and are not repeated here, except in one case.

PREFACE

"IN the following pages will be found an attempt to provide English Readers with a thoroughly good Translation of the Sermons by Bourdaloue, Bossuet, Massillon, Vinet, De La Boissière and others; so that the literary excellence of these works may be as accessible to the lovers of literature this side the Channel as they are to those on the other."

These words from the Preface to the First Volume are equally adapted to introduce the Second, with the exception that what was then but an "attempt" has since been declared by a pleasing consensus of critical opinion to be a success. "*English Readers*," writes the Reviewer of a popular secular journal, "*are provided in this excellent translation of Four Great French Preachers with a literary treat.*" While another kindly critic declares that "*They should do good in this country . . . by showing the clergy that to be devout is not necessarily to be dull.*" Exactly. Why should the word "Sermon" have become suggestive of what is neither literature

nor even lively? If, therefore, the Reader finds these "*examples of noble oratory and lofty teaching*" (as the late Bishop Mandell Creighton, in a very appreciative letter to the Translator, was pleased to term them) to be in their English dress, literature and not dull, then indeed his object will have been attained and his satisfaction be complete; more especially if his Readers should derive, in addition to an intellectual treat, that spiritual benefit which he himself was conscious of while engaged in the delightful task of "tuning the English language to reply to the touch of the French." *

With regard to the doctrinal bias of the sermons and their possible effect upon the Reader's religious principles, they seem, as rendered by this English version of ours, to have hit the happy *Via Media;* or have we been landed in a "No Thoroughfare"? For we are told on the one hand that: "*it is obvious that they can only be used with the greatest discrimination, if at all, by English Evangelical clergymen;*" and, on the other, that: "*it is a pity that the Translator has given a Preface of a Protestant and anti-Catholic character, which must render the work quite unacceptable to Catholics*"; while a third discovers in the sermons themselves "*a strong Evangelical note throughout,*" and remarks that "*many will*

* Dr. Andrew Lang declares that the Art of Translation has yet to be discovered.

read with pleasure the vigorous denunciation of the abuses of the Carnival."

We are led by reading this apparently contradictory testimony to the satisfactory conclusion that these famous sermons are without party bias. That they are Evangelical *and* Catholic, and therefore neither "Papistical" nor "Protestant" in the vulgar acceptation of these two ill-sounding terms. The high-souled men who preached them desired merely to preach the Gospel, and to correct those abuses which made them blush and tremble for the Church and Realm that they held so dear.

We flatter ourselves — perhaps vainly—that there exists nothing quite of their kind in the English Language; for whenever, since Apostolic days, did such Preachers as Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Massillon stand up to address such an assemblage as that presented by King Louis XIV. and his Court? They are therefore bound to be unique specimens of the skill exercised by expert Fishers of Men. The admiration of St. Paul so often and so vividly expressed by these Great French Preachers involved their imitation of him. They were never daunted by the delicacy or difficulty of their task, for their strategy was as simple as it was infallible: Speaking the *Truth* in *Love!* The Power of the Pulpit will never wane so long as from it truth is allowed to appeal

to man's intellect and love to speak to his heart.

Of tracts and sermons for the poor and uneducated there is no lack, but these are specially addressed to the very highest class of society, possessing all the boldness, delicacy, and tactful sympathy which might be expected under the circumstances; and surely it is matter for congratulation that the rich, no less than the poor, should have the Gospel preached unto them.

With regard to Sermon IV., on "Everlasting Happiness," the Translator has the dread of the Critics very strongly upon him. "What has he to say for himself, thus rushing in perhaps where he ought to have feared to tread?" Only this: that desiring to make the volume complete, and not being able to find any Sermon by the Great French Preachers at his disposal bearing upon this subject, he endeavoured to fill the gap—a poor justification possibly, but all that he can offer.

Another apology he must here make, with reference to the insertion of English Poetry in the text. It has been done with a view of enriching the sermons by gathering the great thoughts of great minds.

C. H. B.

P.S.—Since writing the above, the Translator

has met with testimony regarding the practical value of these sermons when read aloud, which was sufficiently unconventional and unexpected to merit, perhaps, notice here.

Returning from church along a dark country road after having delivered the last part of The Science of Suffering—*The Impenitent Thief**—the writer was accosted out of the darkness by passing rustic accents to this effect: "Good night. Thank 'ee for that sermon o' yourn. It was all true."

Could Bossuet have desired higher praise than that? After two hundred years' silence (he died in 1704), to reach the ear, arouse the intelligence, and, let us hope, to touch the heart of this East Anglian labourer!

The listener felt rather guilty in taking all the credit to himself, but the art of explanation would just then have been almost as difficult as the Art of Translation itself!

* See Vol. I.

LENT, 1904.

I

DEATH

BOSSUET

Delivered before King Louis XIV. and his Court.

DEATH.

Domine, Veni et Vide.
"Lord, come and see."
S. John xi. 34.

PROLOGUE

DEATH THE TEACHER OF THE LIVING

HAVE I your permission to open a grave here in the presence of the Court * to-day?

Well, Gentlemen, I do not think that Christian Folk should decline to join with Jesus Christ in looking at such a sight; for it is to Him that the words of our Gospel are addressed: "*Lord, come and see*"—Come and see where we have laid the body of our leper Lazarus.† It is He

* Or, "of this fashionable congregation," if the Sermon be read aloud.

† Lazarus = God is my help. Man can do nothing. Among the Orders of the twelfth century were the Knights

that bids them take away the stone ; and who seems to say to *us* in *our* turn : "*Come and see.*" Come and see *yourselves !*

Jesus does not refuse to look at that dead body, either as an object of His compassion or as the subject of His miraculous power. But it is you and I—worthless creatures !—who will not face this distressing spectacle, because to do so would be to bring home our faults !

Let us Come and let us See, with Jesus Christ. It will suffice to disabuse our minds as to what we are pleased to call "our belongings;" but which Death seizes upon as *his* perquisites !

Strange futility of man's intelligence, that Death should never be present to his thoughts, though visible at every turn, and in a thousand different shapes !

Even the language of the Burial Service strikes somewhat outlandishly upon his ear when it tells him plainly that "this Mortal has put on"—its *Mortality !* Everybody has something to say about the last time they met "Deceased," and what he talked about, and now—lo ! he is *gone !*

"There," says one, "you see what man is !"

of S. Lazarus, whose special work it was to minister to lepers.

It has been supposed that Lazarus was the son of Simon the leper, and that he was the young ruler whom Jesus loved.

Ay, and it is a man who is saying it; but who, blind to his own destiny, fails to see the connection; or if, like a bird of passage, some desire to prepare for what is coming does flit across his mind—such swift-winged fancies soon pass and leave no trace. In fact, Gentlemen, we may say that men are no less careful to bury the *thought* of Death than they are to put the bodies of the dead themselves underground!

Yet perhaps these reflections may produce a deeper impression upon our minds as we meditate upon them with Jesus Christ *at the tomb of Lazarus*. Let us, then, ask Him to imprint them in our memories by the Grace of His Holy Spirit, trying to deserve the same through the good offices of the Blessed Virgin, whom we salute, saying, "*Hail, Mary!*" etc.*

AMONG all the cravings of the human soul, one of the keenest is the desire of knowing; and this spirit of curiosity is so strong that the mind will exhaust its powers in trying to find out some strange secret in the Order of Nature; the skill that underlies some Work of Art; or in fathoming any extraordinary subtility displayed in the Conduct of Affairs.

But with this spacious desire for enriching our understanding by means of freshly imported

* For explanation of the custom of reciting "Hail, Mary!" here, see Appendix of Vol. I for Lent.

stores of knowledge, there happens to us what happens to those who, in gazing at that which is far off, fail to notice the objects that are round about them. I mean that our thoughts, in reaching out with strenuous effort to get at things far distant, and taking a survey, so to speak, of all things in heaven and in earth, pass at the same time so superficially over all that lies close at hand, that we waste our whole life in ignorance of what surrounds us; and not of our surroundings only, but of ourselves into the bargain!

Nothing can be more necessary for us than to recall these wandering thoughts; and it is for this reason, Christian People, that I invite you to-day to accompany the Saviour to the grave of Lazarus. *Veni et Vide:* "Come and see!" Come, all who are mortal! Come and see this exhibition of Mortality! Come thou that art a man and know what Man *is!*

It may surprise you that I should direct you to Death to teach you what you are, and I dare say you think me mistaken when, being anxious to represent Man as he is, I show him to you as he is no longer!

But if you will take pains to understand what it is that presents itself to our view in the grave, then you will readily agree that there can be no more faithful Interpreter, nor truer gauge of things humane, than Death.

"Come then Youth, Beauty, Blood, all ye soft powers
Whose silken flatteries swell a few fond hours
Into a false eternity. Come man,
Hyperbolizèd nothing! Know thy span;
Take thine own measure here: down, down, and bow
Before thyself in thine Idea, thou
Huge emptiness! Contract thyself, and shrink
All thy wide circle to a point. O sink
Lower and lower yet, till thy lean size
Call Heaven to look on thee with narrow eyes;
Lesser and lesser yet, till thou begin
To show a face fit to confess thy kin,
Thy neighbourhood to nothing.
Proud looks and lofty eyelids, here put on
Yourselves in your unfeigned reflexion.
Here, gallant ladies! this unpartial glass
—Though you be painted—shews you your true face.
Those death-seal'd lips are they dare give the lie
To the loud boasts of your Mortality.
Those curtain'd windows, this retired eye,
Out-stares the lids of large-looked Tyranny.
This posture is the brave one: this that lies
Thus low, stands up (methinks) thus, and defies
The World . . .
. . . All daring dust and ashes! * only you,
Of all interpreters, read Nature true." †

The original constitution of any compound thing is nohow so definitely and distinctly exhibited as by the dissolution of it into its several component parts. For since these parts suffer mutual transformation combined, therefore, in order to be known, they must be separated.

The Union of Soul and Body makes the latter

* *I.e.* "Death."

† Richard Crawshay, 1612–1650. A contemporary of Bossuet, and probably known to him.

seem to be somewhat *more* than it really is, and the former somewhat *less;* but when, being separated, the Body goes again to earth and the Soul is set free to return to Heaven, whence it drew forth,* then we see both one and the other singly and simply as it is.

So that we need but to consider what it is that Death takes from us and what it is he leaves untouched ; what part of us falls beneath his stroke, and what other part remains intact among the ruins. Then we shall have understood what man is ; insomuch that I do not hesitate to assert that it is in the lap of Death, and from out of his dense shadow, that there shines an immortal light to enlighten our reason as to the constitution of our common nature.

Quick, then, O Mortals! Off with you to the grave of Lazarus, and there behold Humanity! Come and see at one glance the end of all your schemes and the dawn of all your hopes! Come and see both the dissolution of our being and its renovation! Come and see Life's triumph through Death's victory. Come and see!" †

* "A soul shall draw from out the vast
And strike his beings unto bounds,

"And, moved thro' life of lower phase,
Result in man."

In Memoriam.

† "E'en through the hollow eyes of death
I spy life peering."

Shakespeare's *Richard II.*

We give thee thanks, O Death! for the light with which thou dost lighten the gloom of our ignorance. Thou alone canst convince us of our low estate. Thou alone canst make us know our worth.

If man esteem himself too highly, it is for thee to take down his pride. If man esteem himself too lowly, it is for thee to put fresh heart into him.

In order to adjust the balance between these extreme opinions of his, thou wilt teach him these two truths to open his eyes withal, and give him a thorough knowledge of himself—

I. That he is infinitely despicable because he is a thing of waste and wane.

II. That he is of infinite worth, since his goings forth shall be for everlasting.

In which two important considerations you have the substance of this Discourse.

DEATH·

PART I

MAN: A THING OF NAUGHT

DEATH

PART I

MAN: A THING OF NAUGHT

IT is a bold undertaking to go and tell a man that though he is of course something, yet that after all he is next to nothing.

Each one prides himself upon being what he is, and would sooner be blind than have to recognize his weak points. Great wealth, especially, likes to be dealt tenderly with. It finds no pleasure in being told of its faults; and if people cannot help seeing them, it would feel very grateful if they would kindly keep quiet about them.

Yet, thanks to Death, we are at liberty to speak out plainly. No one in the world is so great as not to feel conscious of some inner vileness; and though it would, of course, be too much to ask even of Vanity herself that she should wear her grossness as an ornament; yet after all what is there about us that is worth the donning?

The ETERNAL for ever!*

* "Vive l'Eternel!" in the original.

Ah, human greatness! Look at you from whatever side I may—except in so far as you come forth from God, and must be rendered to Him again; for *there* I *do* behold in you a ray of mirrored Godhead which commands my homage—but in so far as you are purely human, I say again, from whatever side I contemplate you, I see no good in you at all; because whichever way I turn I find that I am face to face with *death!*—death which envelops the new-gilt splendour of the world in such dense blackness of darkness that I am at a loss where to hang the grandiloquent label, "GREAT," or what accident to accentuate with such high sound!

Let us convince ourselves, Christian People of this important fact by means of the following invincible argument.

Accident cannot be more worthy than *substance;** nor that which is accessory than that

* Two technical terms here employed in a technical sense. That is most properly called an "accident" which may be absent or present, the essence of the species continuing the same, as for *man* to be *walking*, or to be a *native* of *Paris*. "Substance" is literally that which (*substat*) stands under that outward appearance by which the object is presented to any or all of our senses. It—not the "accident"—is the *real* thing. But we men-in-the-street have changed all this. When we talk (and alas! argue) about *transubstantiation* we mean of course (like our opponent) change of substance; but for all of us (who walk by sight and not by faith) the *substance* has come to mean the *accident* (that which is outward and visible); hence

which is essential ; the superstructure more solid than the foundation on which it rests ; nor, in short, matter that is appropriated to us in our outward bodies more important than the assimilating life within.

Now, what is our life? Think over the question, and tell me, Christian people, what *is* our life?

Let us have it from your lips, O death! Man is too proud to answer.

And you, too, O death, are silent ; speaking to the eye and not the ear. Well, a great king shall lend you his voice, so you shall reach the ear, and thence drive home the clear-cut truth distinct and plain.

Listen to this striking reflection of King David as he sat meditating upon his throne, surrounded by his courtly retinue. It is well worthy of your attention, SIRE—

"Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long ; and my substance is even as nothing in respect of Thee." *

no agreement is possible. Hence confusion and unhappy division. We certainly do not believe, nor does any Catholic (Roman, Anglican, or Greek), in *transaccidentation!* And yet many of our popular controversialists try to prove that their opponents do hold this unheard-of doctrine. But the discussion is suited for metaphysicians, and not for men-in-the-street. Ah me! One is almost driven to believe that hell must be happy sometimes!

* Ps. xxxix. 6 (P.B.).

"O King Eternal, self-existent, self-contained, passing from age to age unwaningly, unwearingly, unchangeably Thyself; behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long; and my substance * is even as nothing in respect of Thee!"

No! my substance is as *nothing* in respect of Thee; for every being whose measure can be taken is nothing; because if he can be measured, he has his limits, and when once they have been reached, their boundary cuts off the past as if it had never been. What are a hundred, what are a thousand years if one second can wipe them all clean out? Multiply your days as the hart, endowed by fable, if not by nature, with age-long existence; last like those mighty oaks under whose branches our forefathers reclined, and whose shade and shelter shall be extended to those who will come after us! Into this space, so vast to calculate, crowd honours, riches, pleasures; yet what can the sum-total profit you when death's last faltering sigh shall blast its hollow pomp, as easily as a wayward child blows down its crazy tower of cards?

What use to have filled the book so full of writing, to have covered its pages with characters so beautifully formed, if with one stroke of time's revising pen each line must be erased?

And yet again: of this same douting blot itself, will there remain a single vestige? Not

* Ps. xxxix. 7, *ὑπόστασις* (Sept.).

one! For this latest moment, which with a tick tells off our past existence, must go and hide itself with all the rest in the deep gulf of that which is no longer.

There shall not linger on this earth so much as an echo of our footsteps. Our solid flesh must change its substance: our body find some other name; for even that of "corpse" it cannot claim for long. "*It will become*," as says Tertullian, "*a nobody-knows-what, a thing without a name in any mortal language.*"

So true it is that death will have it all, even to the very terms and titles of the charnel-house, borrowed for an hour just to identify its poor remains! *

For what, O Thou Eternal! is this existence of mine? I enter in at one end of life, to hurry through and pass out at the other. I come to show myself with the rest; and that done I must make off!

Everything beckons us deathward. Nature—jealous, one would imagine, of having done us one good turn—gives us to understand, by means of sundry hints more or less significant, that she cannot spare us much longer the scanty supply of material she has lent us. It is not to remain in the same hands, but must be constantly shuffled for the next and newest deal. She wants it to make other bodies of. She demands its

* Tertullian, *Treatise on the Resurrection.*

restitution for employment in structures yet to be.

This seething army of recruits for the human race: I mean the host of infants that are being born—it seems, as it grows and marches on, to jostle and shoulder us with a "Make way there, will you? It is our turn now!" So that, as *we* have seen others pass away before us, so shall others see us go; who in their turn must play the same part to their successors.

"O God!" I cry again, "what are we good for? What are we at all? If I look on before me, what vast horizons whither I am not yet come! If I turn behind me, what bewildering distances whence I am withdrawn. What a tiny spot I occupy in this great yawning chasm of Time! I am a thing of naught. Such brief continuance confounds TO-BE with NOT-TO-BE. I have been sent here merely to make one; and even so I am but a supernumerary on life's stage, and the piece might have been played out just as well if I had never faced the lights at all."

Moreover, to treat the matter with greater nicety; it is not length of days that distinguishes our existence from nonentity; for, as you know, Christian People, we are never more than one moment this side of it. *Now*,* this moment is

* "Are we not here now?" continued the corporal (striking the end of his stick perpendicularly on the floor so as to give an idea of health and stability)—"and are we not" (dropping his

ours! *Now*, it is gone! And we should have all gone with it too, if, quickly and without loss of time, we had not seized upon the next; and so we shall go on until that moment ticks which is beyond our grasp (reach after it as we may!)* Then down we come, for lack of support. Frail prop of human life! Collapsed foundation of our existence! *In imagine pertransit homo!*

Yes, verily, man passeth away like a shadow. He fades like some half-finished sketch; and just as he has nothing about him that is lasting, so does he pursue only what is visionary and vain: the mirage of happiness always, but never happiness itself!

What a small space we occupy in this great world! So small and so insignificant that I doubt sometimes with Arnobius† whether I am sleeping or waking: *Vigilemus aliquando aut ipsum vigilare quod dicitur, somni sit perturbati portio.*

I cannot tell whether what I call awake be not some troubled moment of a deeper sleep, whether I am not being disturbed by a mere phantom show of shape and form. *Præterit figura hujus mundi:* the fashion of this world passeth away, and my

hat upon the ground) "gone?—In a moment!"—*Tristram Shandy.*

* Time has no meaning, except as future or past, and the present is but the meeting-place of the two.—Prof. Huggins, *British Association Address.*

† Apologist of the Third Century.

substance is nothing before God: *et substantia mea tanquam nihilum ante te!*

"In old days Heraclitus promulgated the doctrine that the universe was not a "being," but a "becoming"; that everything was in a state of flux—"Πάντα ῥεῖ"—that nothing was stationary, or fixed, or permanent. It was absolutely true. In human life the fact was easily recognized; all their efforts were towards the future, their instinct would not allow them to rest on their oars and enjoy the present. Vegetation and degeneration awaited any man or any nation that ceased to energize; they were working always for a future, for the next improvement or advance that they saw to be possible, for a state of things not yet realized, but attainable; and when it was attained they should be working for something still further ahead, and so always. Activity was the rule through the whole world of life, through the solar system and the stellar universe also. Birth, culmination, and decay was the rule, whether it were for a plant or an animal, or for a nation, or a planet, or a sun. Twenty years ago it was thought that the atoms of matter were exempt from this liability to change. The form or grouping of the visible material aggregates

changed, indeed, but, as Maxwell said, the atoms themselves 'remained constant . . . they were the foundation-stones of the material universe, and were perfect in size and number and weight, unchanged and unchangeable, not capable of wear, but as true to-day as when they were coined at the mint of the mighty Artificer in some inconceivable dawn of creation.' Not so; the process of change had now been found to reach to these also. Nothing material was permanent. Millions and billions, ay, trillions of years it might last, but it was slowly changing, not merely the groupings, but the foundation-stones themselves. The atoms were crumbling and decaying; must they not also be forming and coming to the birth? This last they did not know as yet; it was the next thing to be looked for. Decay only, without birth and culmination, could not be the last word. The discovery might not come in their time, but science was rapidly growing, and it might. Science was still in its early infancy; they were beginning to comprehend a few of the secrets of Nature; they were yearly coming nearer to some sort of comprehension of the mind and method infused into the material cosmos. They now knew things which had been hidden from the wise and prudent of all time. Surely somewhere there must be joy at seeing man thus entering into his heritage and

realizing these primal truths concerning his material environment, whereof he had been living in ignorance all these thousands of years."*

* Sir Oliver Lodge, in a Lecture delivered in Birmingham, January, 1904.

DEATH:

PART II

MAN: A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS

DEATH

PART II

MAN: A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS

MAKE up your minds about it, Christian People: that although we are consigned to the utmost part of this Universe—the theatre of change and the domain of death—and although, moreover, local matter of this distant corner of the Universe be inherent in us and that we bear some of it about with us in our inmost selves, nevertheless, in the fibre and tissue of this mortal body, athwart the dimness of our knowledge arising from the prejudice and misapprehension of our sensuous vision, we shall discover, if we can manage to withdraw into these selves of ours, an element whose strong vitality proves beyond question its celestial origin; something which feels no apprehension of decay.

I am not one of those who make much ado about man's knowledge; yet I confess that I cannot contemplate without wonder and astonishment those marvellous discoveries which Science

has made in its attempts to peer into the secrets of Nature, or those inventions of Art by which her resources have been adapted to our use.

Man has practically transformed the face of the Globe. Those animals which were his superiors in muscular power, he has conquered by his intelligence and skill. He has succeeded in training their brute force and in curbing their irresponsible freedom. He has, moreover, by his cunning and dexterity bent to his purpose even the world of inanimate Nature. Has not the earth been forced by his industry to yield him all its finest foods and products; plants to correct the bitter of their uncultured taste to suit his palate, and the very poisons to turn themselves into medicinal remedies, likewise for his health's sake?

It would be superfluous for me to tell of his success in ruling the elements, considering the host of wonders he is daily working with the most intractable ones such as fire and water; two great enemies which, notwithstanding, agree to serve him in so many ways no less wonderful than necessary.

And what besides?

He has climbed the Heavens. To be more certain of his course he has taught the Stars to guide him on the sea; and that he may measure the scale of life with greater nicety he has got

the Sun to reckon its passage for him, step by step.

But we will leave to the Rhetorician the exhaustive and exact account; contenting ourselves, as Theologians, with the observation that God (as says the Oracle of Scripture) having made Man to be the Lord of Creation—a fabric so noble, but so changed through his own fault! —left to Man an instinct which prompts him to seek throughout the realm of Nature that something which he lacks.

That is why, if I may be allowed the expression, he is always boldly and busily rummaging high and low, far and near, among his goods; for there is not a single corner of the Universe where his activity has not made itself felt.

Think for a moment, Gentlemen, how a creature so fragile, so exposed on all sides to bodily attack and injury, could have gained such an ascendency, did he not possess in his spiritual nature a force superior to the whole array of what is outward and visible; an immortal strain of Godhead, a ray of light reflected from the face of his Maker, a trait of His likeness.

Never! Never could he have done it otherwise! As when a skilful mechanic has constructed a machine of rare ingenuity, no one can make use of it without the hints which he vouchsafes,

so God has made this world like a huge machine, which His intelligence and His wisdom alone could have conceived, and which could have been created only by His power.

He has placed it, O Man, all at thy service! He has, so to speak, committed the whole of Nature into thy hands to make what use thereof thou seest fit. He even allows thee to deck and ornament it with the resources of thy art. For what is Art if it be not the embellishment of Nature? Thou mayest, an' it so please thee, add some touches of thine own to the adornment of this admirable picture.

But how couldst thou set in motion, ever so slightly, a machine at once so powerful and so delicate? Or with what grace couldst thou adventure thy innovating brush upon Nature's storied canvas, if in some secret chamber of thy being there dwelt not an artistic instinct derived from the Primal Source of Art itself? Some ideas which are the offspring of the one Eternal and Original Idea; some likeness, in a word; some leakage, some portion of that workman-like instinct with which the world is put together?

And if things be so, Christian People, who can fail to perceive that should all Nature turn conspirator she will never be able to extinguish so splendid a radiation of her central staying power; so that the Soul, superior to the

material world and all its forces, has nothing to fear—save from their Author!

But let us pursue still further, Faithful People, this profitable train of thought concerning the Image of God which can be traced within us. Let us observe what rules this spoilt child of Creation, this creature predestined to turn every other creature to his own advantage, lays down for his own guidance. In our present fallen and corrupt condition, this is, I admit, a weak point of his; yet never can I consider without astonishment and admiration those unchangeable moral laws enjoined by Reason.

What! This soul of mine, planted and imprisoned as she is in the body whose every passion she so fondly and fiercely espouses; who droops and despairs and is no longer herself when that body is out of order or in pain—whence and in what light did she gain the conviction that in spite of all this, she has her happiness apart? That she must boldly ejaculate even while every sense, every passion, if not all Nature, cries out against it: "*To me to die is gain!*" * or "*In that I suffer I rejoice!*" †

Must she not have inwardly divined, Christian People, some beauty singularly exquisite in what she calls her Duty, before she could dare seriously to pretend that she is bound to expose herself even with joy to immeasurable fatigue,

* Phil. i. 21. † Col. i. 24.

to incredible suffering and to certain death, for the sake of Friend or Fatherland, in the defence of Altar or of Throne? And does it not savour of the miraculous that these standing virtues of bravery, of honesty, of righteous dealing, while they can never be abolished—I will not say by time, but by the establishment of any contrary usage—find, to the great advantage of mankind, far fewer people who decry them than they do men who practise them in their integrity?

There dwells within us, beyond all doubt, Divine illumination. "The light of Thy Countenance, O Lord, has shed its brightness upon our souls." There, as in some radiant sphere, we discover the untarnishable lustre of integrity and virtue. That is our fundamental notion of right, and it is a direct revelation. It is the Truth in Person who speaks, and who is bound to make us understand that within us there is something which does not die, since God has rendered us capable of finding happiness even in dying!

But all that is a mere nothing; and I now come to the most wonderful trait of this Divine Resemblance. God knows and contemplates Himself. For God to know Himself is, for Him, to live; and since man is His image, He has determined that man should have this power of self-contemplation too.

"Essence?" "Substance?" "Eternal?"

"Immeasurable?" "Infinite?" "Independent of all matter?" "Free from every limitation?" "Unimpaired by any imperfection?"

Christian People! What miracle is this? We who can perceive nothing but by its limitations, who have only seen the things that change—how did we come to dream of the Eternal? Whence did we get our idea of the Infinite?

"Eternity! Infinity!" cries Saint Augustine, "entities of which our thoughts could never have suspected the existence; how, when, and where, then, did you find an entrance to our minds? For if we are nothing but a certain quantity of matter in bodily form, how are we able to conceive of such a thing as a Being purely spiritual? How have we managed even to invent His Name?"

I am well aware of what can be urged, and with reason, in answer to this statement; namely, that when we speak of "spirit" we do not any too nicely know what we are talking about. Our feeble powers of imagination, not being able to project an idea so single, represent it always under cover of some more or less thin corporeal veil; yet, after all, and when our imagination has done its very utmost to unclothe and subtilize these forms, are you not conscious at the same moment of a heavenly light breaking forth from the soul's depths which dispels and

dissipates those phantom hosts, fashion them as finely and etherially as we may?

If, pressing her still more closely, you ask the soul for the *Reality*, a voice will answer you from her inmost chamber: "What the Reality is I do not know. I do know, however, and *you* have shown me, what it is not."

This Soul of mine! What power, what restless energy, what secret self-born confidence must she feel, that she should amend her own verdicts, give herself the lie, and dare to reject all that she thinks!

Who can fail to perceive that there lies hid within her a spring which as yet has not had full play; which, although it be kept down, and cannot work quite freely, affords clear evidence by means of its singular vitality that it is not wholly of material origin, but that, judging from the upward tendency and pressure of its force, it must be allied with some loftier principle or element beyond?

It is true, Christian People, and I confess it, that such high and heavenly flights we cannot long sustain. The soul plunges again and quickly into its material existence. It suffers from fits of faintness and depression; and, permit me to add—I feel at loss how to express myself—from attacks of an incredible foulness; which, if she possessed no other light, would tempt her to doubt what she can really be.

That is why the wise men of the world, beholding man—so noble on the one hand, and so contemptible on the other—have been puzzled what opinion to hazard concerning such a curious combination. Ask our secular Philosophers what man is. These will make him out to be a God. Those, a Nobody. Some will tell us that Nature nurses him like a mother and makes him her darling. Some, that she treats him like a step-mother, or as so much refuse; while others, not knowing how to account for the existence of such a medley, reply that, in a playful mood, Nature indulged in a little piece of patch-work, and by some such caprice as this produced the amazing puzzle we call Man!

You see, Gentlemen, that neither the one nor the other has hit the mark, and that Faith alone remains as a possible solver of so profound an enigma. Prophets and Sages of the day, you are mistaken! Man is no Nature's darling She ill-treats him too roundly for that. Neither can he be her off-scouring, since there is something in him worth more than all Nature put together: than all inanimate Nature, I mean. While to talk of him as a freak or caprice among the works of God is to utter blasphemy against Eternal Wisdom.

But whence comes such a strange anomaly? Must I tell you, Christian People?

This heap of ill-assorted stones, this pile of incongruous ruin resting on such splendid foundations—does not its every broken fragment cry out that the structure is incomplete? Look (closely and carefully) at the dilapidated building and you will discover traces of a Divine Hand, while the inequality of the work at once betrays the intermeddling of Sin.

This mass of nondescript! O Lord, what can it be? What can it mean? I scarcely know who or what I am! I am fit to exclaim with the Prophet:* *Hæccine est urbs perfecti decoris grandium universæ terræ?*

"Is this that famous Jerusalem? Is this the far-famed City? And *that* the *Temple!* The perfection of Beauty and the joy of the whole earth!"

And I ask in my turn: Can this be Man, made in God's Image, the Marvel of His Creative Wisdom and the Masterpiece of His Almighty Hand?

Yes. It is he. There can be no doubt about it. Whence comes, then, this disunion? And why do we see such ill-jointed seams? It is because man was determined to build in his own way on God's Foundation, and did not follow the plan. So that, instead of the unity of the first design—we have Immortality and

* Lam. ii. 15.

Corruption, Spirit and Flesh, Angel and Beast, all thrown together.

There you have the answer to the riddle. There you see how to disentangle the threads. Faith has made us ourselves again, and no longer can our shameful falls and failures hide from us our inherent dignity and worth.

But alas! Of what good is our dignity? Although in our degradation we still retain some of our high-born aristocratic bearing, we are none the less crushed and fallen; our old immortality only serves to render the tyranny of Death all the more intolerable to us. And though our *souls* escape its thralls; yet if they are made wretched by sin, the price paid for such an exemption may prove too dear!

What are we to say, Christian People? What reply are we to make to so urgent a complaint?

Jesus the Christ shall answer it for us in His Gospel. He comes to see dead Lazarus. He comes to visit human nature groaning under the Empire of Death. And, oh! it is a visit sorely needed! The Workman Himself is come to ascertain what is amiss with His own handiwork; and the reason is that He intends to restore it according to His first design: *Secundum imaginem ejus qui creavit illum.**

* Col. iii. 10: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

Thou hast indeed good cause, O Sin-laden Soul, to dread an Immortality which should render Death eternal!

But in Jesus Christ, behold THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE! He that believeth on Him shall never die. He that believeth on Him hath life already: life inward and spiritual: here he liveth by the life of Grace, which shall bring hereafter the Life of Glory!

But the Body, meanwhile, is subject unto Death.

Soul, be of good cheer! If this Divine Architect who has taken in hand thy repair, allow the old tenement of thy body to fall into decay, He does so in order that He may restore it thee in sounder condition than before. He would rebuild it in better style. For a while it must succumb to the dominion of Death, but He will leave nothing in Death's hands save its mortality.

Do not imagine that we are bound to regard corruption from the chemist's point of view as mere decomposition of a compound substance. We must lift up our hearts and minds higher than that; believing in accordance with the Articles of the Christian Faith that what subjects the Flesh to the necessity of decomposition is that it possesses a taint of evil, that it is a hot-bed of impure desire—in short,

that it is "*sinful flesh*," as says the Holy Apostle.*

Such a flesh, I say, ought to be destroyed, even in the Elect. Being found in the category of sinful flesh, it is unworthy to be joined to flesh beatified; or of entering the Kingdom of God. *Caro et sanguis regnum Dei possidere non possunt.*†

It must of necessity then transform from its older type, so that it may be renewed. The old Man, the old Nature, that is, must be all put off and disappear, that there may be a New Man fashioned directly by the Hand of God.

As the repairs of some ill-arranged and antiquated dwelling are neglected with a view to its ultimate re-erection on a nobler and more convenient scale; so this flesh, wholly out of order and in utter disrepair through sin and its covetous desires, is allowed by God to tumble into ruin that He may rebuild it to His own taste and in keeping with its original design and destiny. It must be reduced to dust because it has been used for sinful purposes.

Seest thou not the Holy Jesus? He that openeth the prison-doors to set the miserable captives free? Those dead bodies there shut in

* Rom. viii. 3: "God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh."

† 1 Cor. xv. 50: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."

shall one day hear His Voice and rise again like Lazarus. They shall rise with a better Resurrection than that of Lazurus, for they rise to die no more; while Death, says the Holy Spirit, founders in the abyss never to show again.*

AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH!

What dost thou fear, then, Christian Soul, in the approach of Death? Perchance as thou beholdest the downfall of thy old home, thou fearest to be left shelterless?

Then listen to the Divine Apostle: "We know, we *know*," says he. We have not to persuade ourselves by means of any doubtful conjectures, but we know it assuredly and for certain, "that when this tenement of clay shall perish, we shall find another habitation prepared for us in the Heavens."†

Oh! merciful provision of Him that knoweth our wants all before!

It is his intention, says Saint Chrysostom, to repair the home He has given to us. But while busied about its undoing and overthrow, in order that He may fashion it anew, He must of necessity dislodge us.

Meanwhile He offers us His own Palace. There He affords us room to rest while we await the thorough restoration of our Home of long ago.‡

* Rev xxi. 4. † 2 Cor. v. 1.

‡ The conclusion of the sermon is lost.—TR.

"What joys are lost, what hopes are given,
As through this death-struck world we roam!
We think at first that home is Heaven:
We learn at last that Heaven is Home."

BISHOP WESTCOTT.

To the Disciples' entreaty, then—

Domine, Veni et Vide!
"Lord, come and see!"

the Lord may surely answer with better right than that of any earthly victor—

VENI. VIDI. VICI!

"I have come. I have seen. I have conquered!"

"*Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord.*"

"Hear what the voice from Heaven proclaims
For all the pious dead;
Sweet is the savour of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.

They die in Jesus and are blest,
How mild their slumbers are!
From suff'rings and from sin releas'd,
And free from every snare.

Far from this world of toil and strife,
And present with the Lord;
For all the woes of mortal life
They reap a rich reward."

AMEN.

A POET'S VERDICT

1. If man is not immortal, earth is darkness, unintelligible, and godless.

2. Granted the extinction of life, 'twere better to cease to be at once; life then loses its significance.

3. Love, if higher than a sensual passion, is impossible without the idea of immortality.

4. The possible glory and worth of character, the battling for the true and the right, deserve a nobler destiny than the mere survival of the atoms of the body.

5. The doctrine of evolution suggests that man should show no exception to the cosmic progress upwards. As he is now fashioned he is "the herald of himself in higher place." Modern sciences have shown how æonial and stupendous were the preparations for man as Nature's supreme work. Is his career to be confined in the limit of three score years and ten?

6. It is irreconcilable with God's Justice that He should create a being with a desire for an immortal and a larger life, and then fail to satisfy that yearning.

7. There are times and states when man "feels he cannot die, and knows himself no vision to himself."

8. An essential condition of human progress is the belief in goodness, truth, purity, and justice. But these require immortality for their fulness.

9. Not to all, perhaps to few, but certainly to Tennyson, are given certain experiences of a super-normal and trance-like condition in which the claims of the mortal body over the spirit seem absurd.

The power of a mighty mind, the influence of a pure life, after fifty-six years of mental and spiritual striving after truth, brought at last such reasonable faith that in sunlit peace was

the passing of Alfred, not into unconscious and impersonal being, but with the echoing of the joyful assurance of Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth—and that I shall see Him for myself."*

> "For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place,
> The flood may bear me far,
> I hope to see my Pilot face to face
> When I have crost the bar."

* *The Mind of Tennyson.*

II

DIVINE JUDGMENT

BOURDALOUE

"Heaven is above all yet; there sits a judge
That no King can corrupt."

Richard II., Act I, Sc. 3.

DIVINE JUDGMENT

Et videbunt Filium Hominis venientem in nubibus cœli, cum virtute multâ et majestate.

And they shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory.—S. Matt. xxiv. 30.

PROLOGUE

THE JUDGE

IT is not without design that the Church, in the ordering of her Gospel-Year, begins and ends with a picture of Divine Judgment.*

She would have us understand that of all the thoughts which can occupy our minds, there ought to be none more familiar to us than that of this dread ordeal of Divine Judgment; for none can be more wholesome.

* See the Collect and Epistle (and also the Holy Gospel: "Gather up the fragments that remain, etc.") for 25th Sunday after Trinity, and the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent.

It has been by the realization of this awe-inspiring fact that such large numbers of dissolute persons have been pricked in their hearts and converted to God; while so many godly souls have been thereby encouraged and confirmed in their Christian course.

By dwelling upon this thought to-day, My Dear Hearers, I may promise myself, with the help of God's Grace, to succeed either in bringing you back from the error of your ways—if, that is, you have unhappily allowed yourself to be seduced and led astray by your unruly wills and affections—or else, in keeping you to the path of godly perseverance, and attaching you more closely than ever to the routine of a methodical, Christian life: supposing, of course, that you have hitherto enjoyed the advantage of such a choice, made once for all, and of having ruled your conduct accordingly.

For it is certainly true that among the many motives capable of detaching us from sin and turning us to God, the most efficacious, *though it is neither the purest nor the highest*,* is fear of Eternal Judgment. Because, dominated as we are by the dictates of self-interest and of self-preservation, how deeply impressed our minds ought to be at the thought of a Judge who by His irreversible decree shall decide for us whether

* This qualification must not be lost sight of. "Save, Lord, by *love* or *fear!*"

our eternal future is to be one of happiness or of misery!

Would to God, Christian People, that it could fall to my lot one day to take in hand your defence at the Bar of that Almighty Judge and to turn His decision in your favour!

But better still, if I can put you in the way of appearing there with assurance, by getting you to fear it in due time, and to some present practical purpose!

That is what I propose to do in this Discourse, and for that we have need of the Holy Spirit's aid.

Let us ask it through the intercession of Mary, whom we honour, saying, "*Hail, Mary!*" etc.

As there exists no Being but God who is wholly and absolutely what He is; and who without the assumption of either title or attribute is able adequately to distinguish between Himself and every other being by declaring Himself pre-eminently TO BE*: *Ego sum qui*

* "*I am that I am.*" It is generally assumed that this is given to Moses as the full *Name* of God. But perhaps it is rather a deep and mysterious indication of His *Nature*. My Nature, that is, cannot be described in words, cannot be conceived of by human thought. I exist in such sort that my whole inscrutable nature is implied in my existence. I exist as nothing else does—necessarily: eternally: really. If I am to give myself a name expressive of my nature, so far as language can be so, let me be called I AM.—Exod. iii. 14. Ellicott's *Commentary*.

Before *a man* can finish saying "I am," he is already no

sum; So there is only this Judgment Divine—this Great Assize, that is, at which all mankind must present themselves before the Tribunal of Almighty God—that, whether it be in Scriptural terms, or in our common parlance, can appropriate to itself the special designation of JUDGMENT.

Consider carefully the reason given for this by Saint Chrysostom; which shall at the same time serve me as a plan in mapping out the lines of this discussion.

It is, says this Father, because none but the judgment of God is without flaw. All other judgments are faulty judgments—either false, that is; or doubtful; or cowardly; or capable of being warped by some warmth of personal feeling; a truth which made Saint Paul declare it mattered little to him if he were judged by man's judgment: *Mihi autem pro minimo est ut a vobis judicer;* adding that take what pains he might in the examination of his own life, he dare not pass judgment on himself*: *Sed neque meipsum judico;* because the judgment he might pronounce upon himself, or that others might pronounce for him, would be either

longer exactly what he was when he said "I." Neither is he ever what he is; not fully himself at any one moment. Hence he can neither say, "I am what and who I am," nor "I am what I ought to be." He must rather content himself with "I was," or "I shall be—perhaps!"—TR.

* 1 Cor. iv. 3.

mistaken or misleading; and that to be judged after that sort was worse than no judgment at all.

"God, therefore," continues the Great Apostle, "is my sole judge: *qui autem judicat me, Dominus est.*"

For only the Judgment of God possesses the two characteristics which can ever render any decision or verdict infallible and place it beyond reach of question or cavil; namely, *Unerring Accuracy* and *Inflexible Impartiality.*

I. *Unerring Accuracy:* insomuch that God as Sovran Judge can never be deceived or fall into error.

II. *Inflexible Impartiality:* which renders Him incorruptible in the discharge of His judicial functions.

Now these considerations, Christian People, should inspire us with a wholesome dread of Divine Judgment. Whatever else may await us—however terrifying or appalling it may be—compared with *this*, it can be nothing!

To have to face the judgment of a God, unerringly exact and inviolably just; or rather of a God who *is* Truth and Equity itself—*that* is what I can never adequately bring my mind to.

Such, notwithstanding, is the thought which I have undertaken forcibly to impress upon you to-day. And since an opposite never appears to

better advantage than when confronted with its opposite, I intend for the edification of your souls to place the judgment which God will one day pronounce upon us, in contrast with that which we now are wont to pronounce upon ourselves, or for the pronouncement of which we give occasion to others.

I. *So:* The Unerring Accuracy of God's Judgment, contrasted with *our* mistakes and *our* hypocrisies.
That will form the FIRST PART.

II. *And:* The Inflexible Impartiality of God's Judgment, contrasted with *our* foibles and *our* partiality.
That shall form THE SECOND.

The infinite importance of both the one and the other calls for your undivided attention.

DIVINE JUDGMENT:

PART I

THE JUDGMENT: ITS UNERRING ACCURACY

DIVINE JUDGMENT

PART I

THE JUDGMENT: ITS UNERRING ACCURACY

It is among the counsels of Divine Providence that we shall one day appear *as* and *what* we truly are; and that we must at last cease from seeming to be what we are not.

I am bold to say, moreover, that God would be found wanting in the discharge of the first of the obligations for which He holds Himself responsible to Himself; were He to allow truth to remain for ever lurking in the dark; either hiding away, or wearing some disguise.

No! He is bound to do her justice at the last, and for ever. Becoming weary, so to speak, of seeing her obscured in the bewildering gloom of doubt and deceit where man would keep her, He would lead her forth thence with pomp and circumstance, as has been so well put by Tertullian: *Exurge Veritas! Et quasi de patientia*

erumpe! "Let Truth arise, and come forth from her bondage!"

Now, that is the purpose for which the Judgment of God stands fixed and determined.

We outrage Truth in this particular; and if you will allow me to say so, she suffers violence at our hands in two different ways. For instead of making an honest use of the light she diffuses, we darken it *within* us by means of wilful self-deception; while we distort it *without* by assuming false appearances. In other words: we will neither know ourselves nor allow any one else to know us: our first precaution being to deceive ourselves* and then to impose upon our neighbours!

There you have the description of our condition and of our conduct; whereas God, acting in a manner the very opposite of ours, and being zealous for Truth, will see that we are undeceived; and that our hypocrisy gets unmasked for good and all: that any false impressions we may have produced upon outsiders shall be obliterated, and those we have formed of ourselves, effaced: that the fumes of passion which have dulled our powers of self-perception shall clear off, however ill it may suit our convenience, allowing an enlightened world to see us all too plainly; but

* "From (1) all *blindness of heart;* from (2) pride, vain glory, and (3) *hypocrisy.*"—*Litany.* Here we proceed from cause to effect.—TR.

not more plainly than we shall then for the first time see Ourselves !

That is what God proposes ; and that is what renders His judgment supremely awful for us to contemplate.

See that you lose nothing, if you please, of a subject so momentous.

Our love of self, Christian People, will carry us the length even of idolizing our vices ; yet what is mighty strange ; and what at first, indeed, appears incredible is, that the reason we have for *loving* ourselves is the very same reason which makes us so mortally afraid of *knowing* ourselves ! And why ?

Well, here is an excellent answer from Saint Augustine.

Because we are conscious that if we knew ourselves we could not help loathing ourselves ; that if we were once to face the hideous reality we should find it impossible any longer to preserve that self-esteem which, having gained possession of us, reigns within.

Hence it happens that, influenced by the subtle instinct of this self-*love*, we keep clear of any such self-*knowledge ;* and that, as things are, men find nothing so disagreeable, so inconvenient—such a nuisance, in short, as to withdraw into themselves, to examine and to form a just estimate of themselves ; for all that can but result in a feeling of humiliation ; and

consequently in the disturbance of the calm of self-complacency and of self-satisfaction on which they love to float.

All that, however, is indispensable, and has to be gone through with. "It is, moreover, a monstrous thing," says Saint Chrysostom, "that an intelligent creature should never know itself, and an egregious anomaly into the bargain, that, though never knowing itself, it should go on loving itself with such an unwarrantable affection!"

What, therefore, will be the upshot?

Apply yourselves, My Dear Hearers, to the study and apprehension of the mystery of God's dealing.

The first result of His judgment will be our recall to this hateful and mortifying business of self-examination, and our being obliged to come to some clear understanding with ourselves as to what we really are; together with His own justification, by confronting and counteracting all *we are* with the sum-total of what HE IS!

"While temporal prosperity lasted," He will say to this worldling, "so long as the bewildering variety of Society's Programme kept your brain awhirl with its kaleidoscopic change of scene and colour, you were too deeply fascinated, too intensely preoccupied to look at *yourself;* and not seeing yourself, you fell a victim to

an all-absorbing fit of self-deception and self-conceit.

"But since, in order to shut out the sight of self, you went on living in such a state of self-complacency; nursing the while in your heart's recesses this blind and blinding self-esteem; therefore I must tear the bandage from your eyes; for Justice demands that I should show Yourself to Yourself, to shame Yourself withal.

"You shall face your wrong-doing this time, not in order to find some remedy for it, but to confess it with self-reproaches: not this time to expiate it by repentance, but to turn away from it in despair: as no longer affording you an occasion for contrition, but covering you with shame: *Videbis factum tuum non ut corrigas, sed ut erubescas.*" And it is this prospect, Christian People, which will prove most intolerable of all to the sinner: one that is bound to crush his spirit and fill him with dismay. For here you see why it is Saint Matthew takes pains to point out that the Reprobate in their appeal to the Mountains and Hills for their aid, do not (as Saint Chrysostom justly and sagaciously observes) cry: "Mountains! hide for us the Face of that God of Glory! Hills! keep us from seeing those devils that are coming to torment us!" But just: "Mountains, fall on us!" Cover us up! Lie thick and dark above us! Bulk massive and impenetrable between Us

and Ourselves! For it will be from our own selves that we shall have to defend us in that day; selves, the mere sight of which it will be our dread anxiety to shun: *Tunc incipient dicere montibus: Cadite super nos; et collibus: Operite nos!* * Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us;" and to the hills, "Cover us."

And, as a matter of fact, if, when standing as prisoners at that bar, we can but find shelter from *Ourselves*—then neither the presence of Jesus Christ, however majestic, nor the look of the devils, however appalling, will be able to cause us a moment's uneasiness!

But let us go into detail; and that we may derive all the advantage I anticipate from the consideration of this First Point, we will proceed forthwith to its discussion.

IN dealing with the things which concern God and our own salvation, we are guilty, Christian People, of two kinds of error:

One, *as to matters of Fact*,

The Other, *as to matters of Duty*.

Mistaken as to matters of Fact, we lose count of our own *Doings*.

Mistaken as to matters of Duty, we practically ignore our *Obligations*.

The manifold aberrations of a warped

* S. Luke xxiii. 30.

conscience may all be ranged under these two Heads.

Now God, who is Eternal Truth, and who by an essential prerogative of His Nature is no less infallible in matters of Fact than He is in matters of Duty, will confront these two forms of error with this twofold infallibility of His judgment.

(*a*) *Its infallibility as to Fact.*

This will bring home to our staggered recollection thousands of sins which we perhaps never so much as gave a thought to.

(*b*) *Its infallibility as to Duty.*

This will force upon our reluctant notice a thousand damning details of prescribed liability and obligation which we absolutely refused either to acknowledge or to fulfil.

Oh, Christian People! would to God that I had the zeal or the utterance of some Ancient Prophet, that I might here apply both of these truths with all their force and in their widest scope!

(*a*) We are daily heaping up sins upon sins; but for all that we live on, unshocked and unshaken, with scarce a shade of self-suspicion before God, or any admission of guilt before Man.

And why is it?

Because we seek merely how to blind ourselves to all the ill we do; and because we seldom or

never give way to self-reproach; because we pass dexterously by all such untoward subjects, never getting at the truth about them; and, finally, because all recollection of them is allowed to slip so easily from our only too accommodating minds.

"And how will God act?"

Answer them, O God, out of Thine own Mouth! Let them learn by the Oracle of Thine own Word! Acquaint them with the usage and procedure of Thy Court of Justice; that so all may get clear, or else—in silence meet their doom! For it is not by any arguments of mine, but by Thy Divine Revelation that this Christian Auditory must and shall be enlightened.

God, My Dear Hearers, will make good herein whatever on your part shall be found lacking. He will look *into* what you have looked *over*. He will sift to the bottom where you have skimmed on the surface. He will put into the account every item you have left out of it. The toss and tangle of the inner life left to the uncertain control of an unstable conscience He will unravel and arrange.

So He has formally declared in His Holy Scriptures, and that in terms which the most callous Unbelief must fain confess itself unable to scan without concern.

Yes, My Brethren, there is God's Judgment to come after ours, and to amend it!

"In what particulars?"

In respect, I repeat, of a host of sins that our levity of character, our fast life, our continual dissipation, the hurry we are in over our self-examination, and our wilful ignorance, have combined to shut out of our sight.

For nothing is more common than the fact of these unknown faults—unknown, I say, even to the sinner who has committed them, yet who finds himself charged with them all before God. Of this fact I can desire no more convincing proof than that afforded by what passes in our Tribunals of Penitence, were I at liberty to disclose the same.

We see presenting themselves at this same tribunal worldly men and women who have suffered years to elapse without approaching the subject. They accuse themselves, of course, to the Minister of Jesus Christ, but the whole of their self-accusation is limited to a few scanty shreds of fact, whose recital is no sooner begun than ended.

Now, can it be said that these evil-doers are less guilty than those scrupulous (not to say anxious) souls, roundly and soundly Christian, who in *their* confession (dealing perhaps with but a few weeks, or even a few days) open their grief with a very strongly contrasted width of scope and wealth of detail, occupying much more of our time in hearing them?

This contrast would be a source of legitimate surprise had we not discovered the secret of it, which is simply this: These worldly-minded men and women of our day, being at small pains to know themselves, cast few, if any, glances at their inner life; and thus they allow to pass unnoticed some most essential and important particulars.

What a number of thoughts, suspicions, judgments, feelings, words and acts there are which never recur to their minds, because they give themselves neither the time nor the trouble to recall them! How many instances of willing assent to evil which they reckon as mere *temptations!* How often a desire, deliberately formed, has been allowed to pass, undistinguished from some unbidden fancy! How many hatreds, too! inveterate in character as they are veteran in years and training, are treated by them as just so many involuntary dislikes! How much indelicate discourse is there which they regard as a display of wit and humour! What tricks and dodges! What underhand ways and double-dealing! What deceit and treachery! What intimidation and sharp practice! And all for the sake of greed and gain, of getting on and up in the world, of making sure of a legacy, or of worming themselves into some snug berth or other!

All this, I say, and much more besides of a

like sort which they are but too well versed in, and which they take credit to themselves for, rather than, on the contrary, condemning it all as so much crime and villainy; but which, far otherwise in their opinion, stands for smartness, expertness, and a knowledge of the world!

Yet all that is never suffered to appear in their review of their own life and character, so that when we, in the performance of our pastoral duties, desire to be enlightened thereupon, and ask them to give some account of themselves, they appear quite at a loss how to answer us, or what to make of our method of dealing with them.

But if, in spite of our efforts, we fail to develop any order out of this chaos, and should we be driven at the last to call themselves as witnesses, there is a Superior Court, whose Judge will, against all such testimony as theirs, produce His own; who, by the evidence which He will give, will make them bear witness against themselves of all the evil they have committed. That is what will happen, as, turning full upon them one electric ray of Truth, He lights them up round about, leaving neither crack nor crevice where the stealthiest atom can hide from His all-prying beams.

"Look, sinner! Look *here!*"—thus shall He speak to each one in particular—"go through

this Calendar of your Past, date by date, year by year. Here you will find every hour, every minute of it duly marked. Here, without addition or omission, is all you have thought, all you have said, and everything you have done. Here you shall behold that passion of which you were the slave, as well as every excess it led you into.

"Here is that selfish interest which sapped your integrity; together with all those hard bargains you drove in its behalf; the knavery it prompted, and which you did not hesitate to practice. Here is the jealousy and the hatred that gnawed your heart, indulged and gratified over and over again at the expense of your good faith, your fair-dealing, your charity, and even of every natural sentiment of affection or pity. Here in one brief word are *you!* And all you have to do is to consider and observe *Yourself.*

"But stay! it is no longer properly speaking your affair at all; for whether you will or will *not*, you shall now be made to look at Yourself; you *must* be, you *are* to be confronted with Yourself, face to face, for all eternity!"

"And with what object?"

"That you may eternally abhor and loathe yourself."

That, I repeat, is what the Lord will say.

"The lost days of my life until to-day
What were they, could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squander'd and to pay?
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?

"I do not see them here; but after death
God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murder'd self, with low last breath:
'I am thyself;—what hast thou done to me?'
'And I—and I—thyself,' (lo! each one saith,)
'And thou—*thyself* to all eternity!'"*

D. G. ROSSETTI.

And now, Brethren, describe for me, if you can, the sinner's terror and amazement; as he discovers at a glance and not without a shudder, that appalling mass and multitude of sins forgotten; of sins long shrunk and set in the dwindling distance by the heedless onrush of Time, who never stops to look behind him; sins hitherto undistinguishable amid an almost hopeless entanglement of *How?* and *If?* and *Perhaps?* But now and here and henceforward to be publicly set forth as they have been minutely catalogued, and withal so close at hand, that not one will be allowed to escape his notice: standing out clear before his eyes in their endless detail and with their manifold deformity!

I do not mean to say that many will never

* *I.e.* And thou shalt be "*thyself*" to all eternity.

know all this before their natural life be ended; for let us turn our attention to another particular which will carry us still further in this matter.

We *are* aware of our misdoings; but owing to a lack of attention far too common with us, we neither face facts, consider effects, nor anticipate consequences; and hence it comes to pass that we let ourselves off with but half the censure our case demands.

Now it is in these particulars that God's Judgment will have to supplement our own: a fact which the Psalmist seizes to perfection when he says to God: *Appone iniquitatem super iniquitatem eorum.** Add, Lord, what Thou knowest to be wanting to their confession of sin. Put iniquity on to their iniquity. Draw from the inexhaustible resources of Thy wisdom what is needed, according to Thine own standard, to supplement their verdict.

For here, remarks Chancellor Gerson,† we have one of the most pernicious forms of self-blindness which can mar the use and wont of Christian Life. We judge, and we condemn ourselves; but owing to an unhappy knack of over-condensation on our part—out of ten sins which are so to speak inevitably entangled and

* Ps. lxix. 27 (*Parallel Psalter*).

† Born A.D. 1363. Chancellor of the University of Paris, which he represented at the Council of Constance, A.D. 1415. See Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Book xiii. chap. viii.

mixed together, we only own to *one;* and *that,* because we deal merely with the isolated sinful act, apart from all that actually resulted from it at the moment; as well as from all that was bound to follow afterwards as its natural consequences.

We go so far as to allow that we *are* too deeply in love with ourselves; but we fail to confess that this self-love has resulted in an inordinate craving to make ourselves attractive to other people. We do not acknowledge that in trying to become thus attractive we have set at naught every instinct of decency; omitting nothing in our behaviour that either vanity or voluptuousness could contribute to our end. No avowal is made that this self-indulgent habit, this longing to be admired, did arouse sinful thoughts and inordinate desires in the minds of others: appetites the symptoms of whose awakening were manifest, whose edge the awakener whetted, delighting to watch their keener glow; instead of endeavouring to extinguish them altogether! But, no! People will not confess that in acting thus they became the ruin of the souls of which they had already been the tempters. *Appone iniquitatem super iniquitatem!* "Put iniquity on to their iniquity!"

A man will say: "Yes, it was a little love-affair; and I was betrayed into some talk of too free and loose a character." But not a word to

the effect that that little love-affair was the means of gradually cooling and of finally extinguishing love not only *legitimate* but *due* where it had been solemnly pledged and promised. Not a word about the disputes and jealousies provoked by that free and easy conversation, whereby the peace of a family had been broken. Not a word as to the public scandal caused when the little love-affair got wind: *Appone iniquitatem super iniquitatem!* "Put iniquity on to their iniquity!"

Another says: "I was certainly too much given to playing for money." But he will not confess that this addiction to playing for money, this gambling, besides contributing to the enormity of an idle life from whose lethargic sloth it was impossible to rouse him, was furthermore the cause of his neglecting certain responsibilities of the most weighty kind; of his turning aside from the performance of his religious duties, and of his failing to interest himself in any Christian work; that it gave a bad example to his children, countenanced the immoral conduct of his servants, prevented him from paying his debts, and provoked him into defiant outbursts often directed against God Himself: *Appone iniquitatem super iniquitatem!* "Put iniquity on to their iniquity!"

"I did speak"—one may admit so much—"I did speak somewhat uncharitably about a

neighbour." But what one does not admit is, that speaking so cost that neighbour his credit and his good name. What one does not admit is that that evil-speaking hindered him in earning his daily bread. What we do not admit is that we spoke as we did to avenge some alleged injury on his part. No! That is just what you and I will not admit to others; indeed who knows whether we have ever admitted it to ourselves? But God will bring it all home to us; and it is thus that by His judgment He will put iniquity on to iniquity; to those sins already known, that is, He will add all those others that we have never noticed, or that have been forgotten: *Appone iniquitatem super iniquitatem.*

Those, I say, that we have forgotten; because in this respect our memories are phenomenally short. But God, whose interest it is to reawaken and to retain such recollections, will see that they are rescued from oblivion for the future.

Do you ask me how?

By illuminating these our memories with the light of His own understanding, whereby those past sins of ours are kept ever present to His sight; and this He will do by means of an application so clear and circumstantial that we shall never have it in our power to obliterate the impression then and there produced.

Light *Divine!* Take good heed, Christian People! Light, whose work, on that account, is compared not to that of the tongue but to that of the pen of a ready writer: *Lingua mea calamus scribæ, velociter scribentis.**

My tongue, says the Prophet, when it is expressing the thoughts of God is a scribe's pen.

What does he mean by that?

No similitude could be more apt, replies Saint Jerome. For, just as a scribe forms characters that are to *last*, retaining their original clearness for centuries together and always representing to the eye that which they were meant to convey from the very first—whereas the passing sounds produced by the tongue cease as soon as they are uttered—*so* it is the property of God's Light to shine for ever; insomuch that when once its pictures have been printed on our hearts as God will photograph them there, we shall never afterwards be able to shut out of sight the causes which brought upon us His adverse judgment.

No! There stands our Accusation *written;* to confront our gaze for ever, glowing in letters of living light, blazoned in God Himself.

And this, Brethren, says Saint Bernard, is what God would have us understand, by that

* Ps. xlv. 2: "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer."

verse in Deuteronomy;* where, after having enumerated the sins of His People, He concludes thus: *Nonne hæc condita sunt apud me, et signata in thesauris meis?* "Are not all these things kept by me in store? Are they not all sealed up in the Treasure House of my Justice?"

Do you notice, Christian People, God's way of dealing with us?

If in a penitent spirit we *now* keep our sinful doings in remembrance, placing them always before our eyes and going over them all with bitterness of heart, then—all out of order as these doings may have been—we shall have transformed them into assets of mercy in our reckoning with God.

But because we wilfully allow them to pass out of mind, God gathers them all up, turning them into a different kind of reserve altogether; namely the heaped-up wrath spoken of by the Apostle: a store to be brought forth against us in the Day of Manifestation: store to which He will set His seal so that no amount of ignorance or forgetfulness on our part can diminish the bulk of it by so much as one grain: store, moreover, whereby our own minds and our own memories shall, whether with or without our assent, be kept ever on the alert as to what "we have done," "what we do," and "what we are

* Deut. xxxii. 34: "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?"

doing!" *Nonne hæc condita sunt apud me, et signata in thesauris meis?* "Are not all these things written in my Book?"

(*b*) So much, then, for errors of Fact. There are others, however, which I shall call errors of Right and Duty; the radical source of our trouble being, in short, that we are wrong even as to first principles; so that by a dislocation of judgment which affects us no less as reasoning and reasonable beings than in our character of Christian men and women; we set up for ourselves a conscience which even our Reason—dunce and sloven as it has become—cannot accept unchallenged; a conscience which, balancing Duty against Interest, gauges the scope of our obligations by the rise and fall of the barometer of our passions; consigning us to the conduct of our own sensations, feelings, and opinions; to the neglect of that Divine Light and Guidance furnished by Religion: a conscience which serves us as a medium for the qualification or modification of all Truth and Fact as may best suit our own convenience; counting for naught, or as next to it, the very conditions of our salvation; adopting the verdict of the world as to what is criminal and what is not; never dreaming that what does not shock Society can ever be amiss in the sight of God; and accepting as decent and allowable whatever bears the *imprimatur* of Social Custom. Our Faith, instead of doing

battle with the World, is cut and trimmed to suit it, till even that process ceases at last from sheer lack of material!

But God, Christian People, when He comes to Judgment will rectify every false notion, dispel the fogs of self-deception, and re-adjust deflected consciences. It will be as He says: "After your turn, *Mine!*" *Cum accepero tempus.**

Those consciences we fel so sure of and on which we leaned, God will show us to be full of error, unrighteousness, prejudice, bad faith; and as such He will test and reprove them.

Yet He furnished us from the very outset of life with means and methods for dealing with them ourselves. For we had but to apply them to the square of His Law; we had but to submit them to the judgment of those appointed by Him in His Church to be our Ghostly Counsellors, or even to our earlier estimate of right and wrong, before our judgment had been dulled and warped by sin.

But since we have done nothing of the kind,

* Ps. lxxv. 2. (*The Parallel Psalter*, by Dr. Driver).

"For I will take the appointed time:
I judge with equity.
When the earth and all the inhabitants thereof
Are melted away
I adjust the pillars of it.
. . . . . .
(Verse 7) For God is judge
He putteth down one and setteth up another," etc.

and full of worldly notions, have always been determined to follow these deviations of our unsteady consciences; therefore God, in order to set us right, will meet their variableness with the strictness, the integrity, the incorruptibility of His own Judgment.

"And how, or with what words shall we answer Him?"

We must come before His Presence with the confession of Job upon our lips, but with greater cause for uttering it than that godly man ever had: *Verè scio quod ita sit, et quod non justificetur homo compositus Deo.** "Of a truth I know that it is so: But how can man be just with God? If he be pleased to contend with Him, he cannot answer Him one of a thousand."

Yes! we often heard and now we see how true it was! that Thy thoughts, O Lord, were very different and far above ours. We managed to justify ourselves in our own eyes, but it did not follow on that account that we should be justified in Thine. Indeed, it is because we were so easily justified in our own sight that we are found all the more guilty in Thine.

Or, perhaps, My Dear Hearers, better say nothing at all! There being nothing for it but to remain sadly and abjectly silent—found out, afraid, ashamed!—with the claim of a just and awful reprobation closing in upon us on every

* Job ix. 2.

hand: no longer to be deferred, no more to be shirked; but *there!* Indefeasible and not to be gainsaid!

For, standing, as we shall, transparent in the light of Everlasting Truth, we cannot quench its piercing rays as they trace and retrace for us certain hideous aspects of form and character which we recognize to be our own!

But I should never come to an end, if, with the view of working out my plan and bringing this First Part to a close, I were now to begin to show you by means of any fresh illustrations how God who is Truth Eternal and Infallible; not content with making us known to *Ourselves*, that He may undeceive us of our errors; will furthermore make us known to *Others*, that He may tear the mask of our hypocrisy from off our face.

Hypocrisy! Special characteristic of our times! Characteristic of all times marked by moral corruption; for moral corruption cannot spread itself without assuming some virtuous guise.

Hypocrisy! Inseparable companion of all heresy! Originator of every sect; for not one has ever dared to show itself without presenting a specious appearance of Progress or Reform!

Hypocrisy! That by way of achieving perfection, marchest along the Road to Ruin! That under pretence of tolerating neither

meanness nor mediocrity in divine worship, art surely but insensibly bringing that worship to naught!

Hypocrisy! That with the correctness of thy moral code dost cover deeds of the basest sort and blackest dye: venting from behind a forbidding mask of stern ecclesiasticism, affront and insult upon true and genuine piety!

Hypocrisy! That with pride etherealized and bearing the name of zeal, passest sentence of condemnation upon all mankind; making a virtue of all evil-speaking, lying and slandering; neither sparing the Powers that Be, nor showing pity to any man!

Hypocrisy! That to gain thine own ends, dost set in motion all manner of levers! Unscrupulous hatcher of plots! Employing no matter what means, deeming nothing unlawful, so it be found handy to thy purpose; nor anything forbidden that can turn to thy advantage or advancement!

There! Ah! *There!* At that Bar shalt thou stand! *There,* for the upbuilding of Truth's diminished credit shall God make large and public all thy shame! Himself hath said so; but in words that I should have hardly dared to use, had they not thus secured the sanction of His own divine endorsement: *Ostendam gentibus nuditatem tuam et regnis ignominiam tuam.**

* Nahum iii. 5.

"I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame."

Yes! All thy vile behaviour shall be published to the world: thy trickery, thy fraud, thy treacherous dealing, thy partisanship, and each one of thine abominable acts—all the more damning for thee at the last, that they have been kept so long and so successfully from the eyes of men: *I will show the nations!* All shall be made known to all; and thereby will I satisfy not Myself merely, but the Assembled Universe!

Thou hast seduced the people. Thou hast abused their confidence. Shamming thyself honest, guileless, and austere, thou didst attract —thou didst attach the people to thyself; snuffing up the incense of their adulation, and glutting thy soul with their praise.

The mystery of thine iniquity will I unveil in the high noon. Thy stealthy turpitude shall be proclaimed in the broad day. It shall be seen of all men. Thou shalt endure the scrutiny of eyes wide open at last, no longer to be blinded by thy deceit. "*I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.*"

You hear the threat, Christian People; and you may imagine what its effects will be when put into execution. But what am I saying? Who could ever describe those effects? Who can even conceive them? For instance, can any

one realize, let me ask, the confusion which would suddenly overtake, and as surely overwhelm, Mr. Such-an-One or Mrs. So-and-So, present among us here this morning who are carrying about with them hidden away in the dark recesses of their life, secrets, which if divulged would mean their social ruin; yet who walk with their heads all the higher, with bolder step, and a more swelling air; but who would reckon themselves lost at once and for ever, if what they are keeping so carefully and so closely concealed beneath that genteel exterior were ever to come out—not before the world at large, but just before this particular person or that! In vain would they seek for night thick enough to hide them, or pit deep enough to fling themselves to the bottom of!

Who, I ask again, can picture what the ignominy of an exposure so full and formal as that will be?

To see themselves set up as on some public stage for exhibition, to furnish a gazing-stock for all intelligent beings; when the innermost and the uttermost of their vileness, their infamy, their cunning, their filthiness—together with all that was foulest and least befitting in their darkly premeditated schemes; in their got-up appearances; in their roguery and rascality; in their low-bred pleasures and beastly self-indulgence—when all that, I say, is dragged

forth from its concealment to be displayed before mankind; and, above all, when they themselves, objects of universal scorn, shall behold the astonishment and indignation of those whom they lately imposed upon—of those who used to take them for what they appeared to be, what moreover they tried so hard to be taken for, namely: upright, sincere, unselfish, self-controlled, virtuous, honest: but who will then begin to know them for what they *are:* faithless, incontinent, immodest, unchaste, uncharitable, unjust, unholy!——

It is beyond my power to give you any idea of what that ignominy will be; nor does anything that transpires upon earth come at all near it.

If a man gets into disgrace and is disowned in this world—well, he disappears. He is done for in only one section of Society; in some particular locality; or in the country where he dwells. Besides, the affair soon blows over.

Whereas, the Hypocrite unmasked at that formidable Judgment Seat, will be obliged to remain under the public eye whether he will or no. The detailed history of his hypocrisy shall be engraved in every memory, there to abide for ever as a monumental shame.

"Oh, God! that Thou wouldst grant that ne'er
My soul its clay-cold bed forsake,
That I might sleep, and never wake
Unto the thrill of conscious fear;

For when the trumpet's piercing cry
Shall burst upon my slumb'ring ear,
And countless seraphs throng the sky,
How shall I cast my shroud away,
And come into the blaze of day?
How shall I brook to hear each crime,
Here veil'd by secrecy and time,
Read out from thine eternal book?
How shall I stand before thy throne,
While earth shall like a furnace burn?
How shall I bear the with'ring look
Of men and angels, who will turn
Their dreadful gaze on me alone?" *

The remedy, Brethren, the best preventative we shall find, and one we may profit by at once, is to deal honestly with ourselves now, and endeavour thoroughly to know ourselves; to strive, furthermore, and in like manner, to make ourselves known *as* thoroughly to those who have a right to that knowledge—to those, I mean, who minister in our Tribunals of Penitence. Let us get to know ourselves, and be stirred to self-reform. Let us make ourselves thoroughly known to those physicians of the soul that they may be the better able to deal with our case, and arrive, to our greater advantage, at the healing of our infirmities. There at their feet, let us suffer with all Christian humility an undoing as wholesome as it is *personal* and *private*. Let us ask God to pour out upon us and upon them alike, the spirit of *truth;* and

* Tennyson, *Remorse.*

let us hope that it may prove to be the Truth Itself, the Sovereign Truth, guiding us by means of their Ministry! Without that we shall have everything to fear from the Truth Infallible which nothing can *deceive;* as well as from that Inflexible Justice which nothing can corrupt: as I have now to show you in the SECOND PART.

DIVINE JUDGMENT:

PART II

THE JUDGMENT: ITS INFLEXIBLE IMPARTIALITY

DIVINE JUDGMENT

PART II

THE JUDGMENT: ITS INFLEXIBLE IMPARTIALITY

SOMEWHERE there is bound to exist rigorous and flawless Equity.

It is difficult for us to doubt, moreover, that such Equity is to be found enshrined in God; or that it *is* there enshrined in order that it may one day serve to make good and to correct the innumerable shortcomings and abuses proceeding from our love of self.

No matter what amount of light we may enjoy for the purpose of conducting this process of introspection, yet we very seldom possess the necessary courage to proceed against ourselves and to treat ourselves with a severity proportioned to the fulness and accuracy of our self-knowledge.

We *do* condemn ourselves—pay attention, if you please, to these Three Thoughts, to which I reduce all that I have to say in this Second Part—we do condemn ourselves; but at the same time

we (*a*) give the condemned self a good deal of grace, and we are anxious, too, that others should treat it tenderly likewise; aye, even in that most Holy Place whither we repair to receive *present* judgment: I mean where we make confession of our sins.

We acknowledge ourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, but at the same time we (*b*) take into account our position in society, expecting to reap some secret advantage from our social standing and from conventional class-distinctions.

We acknowledge ourselves to be guilty and deserving of punishment; but in the same breath we whisper to ourselves (*c*) that we are weak, or to put it more euphemistically, nervous and highly strung, and ought therefore to be let off; demanding at the hands of others, and for the same reason, the like consideration and leniency of treatment.

Three forms of Self-Love: three mistakes which often keep worldly-minded people in a state of impenitence for a life-time together. Three symptoms of flagging spiritual vitality, for which the inflexible justice of God must supply the remedy, and in the following way:—

God, My Dear Hearers, will judge us without any reference or deference to our social distinctions whatsoever; all of which will, on the contrary, tell against us. He will judge us

without considering the tension of our nerves or the state of our feelings; indeed, this overwrought sensibility of ours will offer the chief point of incidence for the onslaught of His formidable indictment.

One moment more! before abandoning these reflections.

In passing sentence upon ourselves we always make allowances. God will make none; and here we have the most fearful of all the facts presented to us by our Religion; but which is at the same time one of the best established; for we possess the following definition of the Divine Judgment enunciated by the Holy Spirit Himself: *Judicium sine misericordiâ.** "For he shall have judgment without mercy."

Judgment without Mercy! And why must it be so? In order that it may neutralize the noxious leniency shown by us in dealing with Ourselves.

The misconception we labour under is this: we think that the case in question being our own we have as a natural consequence the right to pronounce judgment in our own favour: whereas, on the contrary, that is the very reason why it is impossible for us to bring to bear upon it a severity too uncompromising. If it were a question of judging some other person, that

* S. James ii. 13.

would be the time for allowing the quality of mercy its freest play; when, indeed, it could hardly be pushed too far, or run much risk of being misdirected.

But the moment we become our own judges, then the chief snare to be avoided is the tendency to be over-indulgent, and to show a too great considerateness, entirely self-begotten, and which is therefore never at a loss to invent hundreds of excuses for the defence of its prolific parent. Yet that is always what happens. We demand that our very priests; they who in God's stead preside at the secret judgment of souls in the Sacrament of Penance;* should so far become our accomplices as to give their sanction to this self-indulgent treatment.

By being indulgent towards ourselves in the matter, we oblige *them* also to a certain extent,

* *An English Theologian treats as follows on this subject*:—"The priests to whom as officers of the Church, Jesus Christ has entrusted the absolving power (S. John xx. 23) exercise it as no possession of their own, but ministerially for Him. They are His Ambassadors, offering reconciliation on no terms but His; but on His terms confidently offering it. And what they offer must not be coldly reduced to a remission of Church censure: it is the blessing of a free and bold access again to the living God, who has been justly displeased. Nor is this Absolution a purely subjective thing. There is in it as in Baptism, a real, substantive movement of that cleansing grace which is stored in the Church. Whether it takes effect or not depends upon the condition of the recipient. But in any case the grace is there."—Dr. A. J. Mason's *Faith of the Gospel*.

and after a sort, to become so too: granting us, that is, whatever our convenience demands and dispensing us from everything that might cause us pain, or involve our mortification.

Whence it daily comes to pass that while (with an inconsistency as unbecoming as it is, at the same time, thoroughly characteristic of our day) we, as a *community*, are scandalized at the too great indulgence shown generally by the Church's Ministers, yet as *individuals* we are privy to it; using all sorts of artifices whereby to induce her ministers to adopt our views or further our interests; being at a loss to find Confessors severe enough to deal with *other* people's sins, but securing the most indulgent and accommodating ones we can find when we have to confess our own!

It is owing to this, moreover, that they feel themselves placed by us under a kind of obligation to provide excuses and to hunt up extenuating circumstances; and all to their own hindrance in the discharge of the Holy Function entrusted to them; but which they lack the courage duly to perform, simply because *our* courage is so conspicuous in trying to abate their earnestness and to weaken their authority.

But God, Christian People, who is the Supreme Judge; at whose Bar not only our misdoings but the estimate we have formed of our misdoings shall be dealt with, will then

upset all those arguments and arrangements with His Great Final Verdict which He has declared shall be without mercy: *Judicium sine misericordiâ!*

The reason, as Saint Augustine tells us, is that Justice will then be acting *alone*. It does act now, of course, but not alone; or, rather it is Mercy acting *in* and *through* Justice; for this very Justice which God sets in motion against us here in this life is often nothing less than some special exhibition of His Mercy; since it is certain that God never punishes us in this world merely for the sake of punishing us. His punishments, on the contrary, are means employed for our *Conversion*, our *Sanctification*, and our *Instruction;* so that according to the Rudiments of the Faith, His chastisements are just so many benefits, just so many tokens of His good will towards us.

But at that Great and Final Judgment He will listen to nothing but Justice; He will execute nothing but Justice; He will consider exclusively the claims of Justice; for the largesse of His Mercy will have been already offered and neglected or rejected. Its resources will have been at length exhausted.

Worse still! That Mercy which was offered to us all in vain, that Mercy which we treated with contempt and scorn, that Mercy which we trampled underfoot, will serve only to aggravate

the rigour of the Justice. And if you ask me in what manner—I answer: "by turning into an Accusing Witness, that Mercy which might have served us as a Zealous Advocate:" *Judicium sine misericordiâ.* Judgment without mercy!

Ah! Christian People! What will that unwarrantable leniency extorted by us from the Vicars of Jesus Christ avail us *then?* Will those allowances they used to make for us be accepted in our favour?

Will God admit them? Will He conform *His* judgment to *theirs?* What they loosed on earth will He loose in Heaven? Does the Power-of-the-Keys with which He invested them go that length?

No! No! Dear Hearers, that can never be! God would have them by all means show themselves Ministers of Mercy, but of a Mercy firm and wise; not of a mere indiscriminate, sponge-like good nature; a Mercy, rather, which deals with vicious propensities and bad habits as a pruning-knife, not one that fosters and flatters them; a Mercy that protects the honour and credit of His Name, not such as sullies and dishonours it. For any such Mercy as that—weak, timid, ready to give way at every point—will damn the Priest while it can never save the Sinner! So much so, that neither the one nor the other of them can look for anything at the

Hands of God save Judgment without Mercy: *Judicium sine misericordiâ!*

(*b*) And now for a *second* abuse, which follows as a natural consequence of the first.

We presume upon our Social Distinction; so that finding ourselves highly placed among the well-born and the well-to-do whom the world looks up to with abject awe, we expect that God will feel equally impressed and overcome. So very seriously, in fact, do we take ourselves, that when those Ministers of His Justice, the Priests of the Dispensation of Grace, proceed to deal with us according to the commonly accepted and universal rules of the Christian Religion of which we make profession—then we take it amiss: begging that they will use some discretion and not confound us with the common herd.

In fact we measure their claim to the qualification "discreet and learned" * by their quickness of discernment as to "Who is Who."

Is not this just what does pass between those who minister the "benefit of absolution" * and ourselves?

Now let us see what passes at God's Judgment Seat.

* See the end of the First Exhortation in the Office for Holy Communion: "Let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Holy Word, that he may receive the benefit of absolution."

Were I to tell you, that the distinction most affected by God in Holy Scripture is that He should be regarded as "No Respecter of Persons"—the Pharisees themselves giving Jesus Christ this much credit even to His face, that His opinions and decisions were formed and arrived at without regard to the Persons of Men: *non enim respicis personam hominum* * ; and that even in the case of His Mother, the most exalted, that is, of all His creatures ; this God-Man acted with the like exclusive impartiality, neither exalting her in this world, nor assigning her a place in the Glory of that which is to come, in consequence of her particular importance or dignity, but solely with regard to her *character* and personal merit: *Laudent eam opera ejus*†—Were I to tell you all that ; I should simply be telling you what you have heard a hundred times already, and what ought to have upset your absurd pretensions, based as they are upon the artificial inequalities of Social Precedence.

To-day, however, I have something more startling to tell you.

"And what might that be?"

This: that your Rank and Quality, very far from turning to your advantage, will make God

* S. Matt. xxii. 16: "We know that thou art true . . . neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men."

† Prov. xxxi. 31: "Let her *works* praise her."

more severe and implacable in dealing with you than ever.

"Who says so?"

Himself—in the following judgment pronounced by Wisdom in Person; each word of which should sound like a thunder-clap in your ears; words, moreover, which have already proved the conversion of so many among the Leaders of Society: *Audite ergo vos qui continetis multitudines et placetis vobis in turbis nationum. Quia horrende et citò apparebit vobis; quoniam judicium durissimum his qui præsunt.**

"Take notice, you who rule nations, and who have pleasure in the multitude of peoples by whom you are looked up to! Take notice that this God of Majesty shall suddenly come upon you in a manner that shall fill you with fear. For a sharp judgment shall be to them that be in high places: *quoniam judicium durissimum his qui præsunt.*"

To attempt to show you the reasons for such a declaration would be to impose upon myself a useless task; since your own melancholy experience has made you but too familiar with them, namely: the disregard of God in which those live who are accounted Great upon earth: their forgetfulness of their dependent condition: the display they make of their power: and—not to

* Wisd. vi. 2 and 5.

enter into any further particulars—the want of feeling shown to those who are placed under them: these supply an ample justification of the severity with which God in His Providence shall judge them.

There, any way, stands the decree uttered by Eternal Wisdom: "For Wisdom will soon pardon the meanest: but mighty men shall be mightily tormented." *

If there must mingle with God's Justice some strain of Mercy, it will be for the feeble and the insignificant; but as for the Great and Powerful of the day—the grander their position, the heavier the stroke!

I was mistaken therefore, when I said that God would take no account of your Social Rank and Quality.

Yes, My Dear Hearers! you shall appear once more, and that before His Judgment Seat, just as you are here, decked with all the gold and tinsel you are wearing now. But that is just what will kindle God's anger against you and bring his most scathing anathemas about your head!

Your wish, *then*, will be that God had been kind enough to make no difference or distinction at all in your favour, and that He had classed you in the very last and lowest rank of those before Him; but that is precisely what the rules

* Wisd. vi. 6.

of His inviolable Justice would never have permitted Him to do.

You must be judged, whether you like it or not, as Important Personages, since it is as such that you will have to be punished. Thus fared the Pharaohs, the Belshazzars, and the Antiochuses. They were Princes, and that is why God in Holy Scripture fulminates against them decrees which make us quake even at this day!

You may safely take it for granted that their fate will be your own; and that living as they lived, what happened to them will surely happen to you. If you demand why; I answer: because to this rule there is no exception: *Quoniam judicium durissimum his qui præsunt.* "The Mighty Men shall be mightily tormented."

(*c*) I now come to the third and last abuse, which is this:

We imagine that we are nervous and sensitive, and because it is our good pleasure so to be, we establish the right, nay we impose upon ourselves the obligation of sparing our feelings. Thus, what God looks at as self-indulgence and impenitence, that we enthrone as a duty!

When it is a matter of sparing ourselves we have no scruples at all; but when, on the other hand, it is a case of self not getting let off, then we should be very glad of a few.

Though Scripture speaks to us, moreover, of the indispensable necessity of crucifying the flesh with its sinful lusts, yet we seize the first pretext for escape offered by the smallest inconvenience, or the slightest want, felt or fancied as the case may be.

Again: If this over-sensitiveness affected merely certain self-imposed exercises suggested by Christian Penitence, certain acts of voluntary self-discipline less explicitly enjoined—*well.* But what is most to be deplored is that people make use of it as a plea for wholesale dispensation from rules and observances, even of the strictest, most universal, and most formal kind.

As for fasting and abstinence they are looked upon as part of an unworkable system. Should the Church's Ministers, depositories as they are of her laws, and charged with their execution, enter seriously upon the consideration of these injunctions without first of all consulting *us* on the matter, they are held to be Ministers of the *in*discreetest kind, and but little versed in the ordinary affairs of life.

But what affords them a still more legitimate ground of complaint is the fact that the rich and well-to-do of our day are they who make the most fuss about their pretended weaknesses and their delicate health; just because the abundance amid which they live has sapped their strength,

and that surrounded by all that can please and pamper their fleshly nature they find themselves quite worn out and unable to undergo what others living under hard conditions both bravely and consistently face!

Hence, no care on their part to give satisfaction to God.

Yet there is satisfaction owing to God, and God will have His due.

"How will He get it?"

Well, since our delicate condition hinders us from giving Him satisfaction, He will take it of His own accord, and by means of the inflexible impartiality of His Judgment.

"But in a Court of such rigorous equity, should not this alleged impotence avail us as a legitimate plea?"

Strange, My Dear Hearers, that man should be seeking to justify himself before God by pleading the very circumstance on account of which God is about to condemn him! Strange that presumption should be pushed to the point of screening ourselves with our own failings in order to avoid paying the penalty which is due!

For we base our procedure on this squeamishness of ours in order that we may muster up some courage and assurance in prospect of Divine Judgment; yet it is because of this same squeamishness that God will condemn us.

"How can He do that?" Why, by reminding

us of what is only too patent and too true; by making us see that that delicacy was all affectation, as unreasonable as it was exaggerated and carried to extremes; and that therefore in allowing that we are weak we acknowledge that we are wicked. So that, far from calling for any modification of our sentence, it should make it all the heavier, in proportion to its responsibility for our having gone from bad to worse, and for having furnished us with a means of ridding our minds from all anticipation of any penalty or pain whatever.

Listen, further, Christian People, to the formidable decree which the Lord has already promulgated in the Scriptures, and which He will pronounce with His own lips and with all the pomp and circumstance of His Heavenly Assize: *Quantum in deliciis, tantum date illi tormentum et luctum.** "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her."

Her sloth, her indolence, her ease, and her life of luxury shall be the gauge and measure of her damnation and her torment. Thus did He exterminate of old, and thus will He exterminate at the last, but more effectually, Effeminacy together with the Effeminate.

Thus will He round on them, recouping Himself with interest for the voluntary satisfaction

* Rev. xviii. 7.

He awaited at their hands, but which they declined to offer Him.

*Abstulit effeminos de terra.**

I conclude what I have to say on this point, My Dear Hearers, with some important advice I have to give you ; but at which possibly you may take offence, should you fail to understand it in the sense intended.

For I say : Love yourselves, Brethren ! Love your flesh too, if you like ! I am quite agreeable. It is not precisely the love of yourselves or the love of your bodies that God condemns ; since no one, according to the Holy Spirit's statement, ever yet hated his own flesh. *Nemo enim umquam carnem suam odio habuit.*†

Therefore, once more I say, Love ! Love that flesh of yours ! But love it with a Christian Love, not with an unwholesome affection, an affection that is of the earth, earthy. Love it I say for the next world, and not for this. Of all the ills that flesh is heir to, spare it the greatest : namely, that of everlasting pain with which it is already threatened and towards which it is being driven by self-indulgence !

Nor can you ever be said to love it with that wise and genuine love, until you have come to

* 1 Kings xv. 12 : "And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made."

† Eph. v. 29.

hate it—to hate it, I mean, for the present, by afflicting it, by renouncing it, by keeping it under, by making a victim of it, and by offering it as a living sacrifice.

Such language sounds harsh, I know; and the flesh of course will resent the proposed treatment, but that does not cause me the least surprise; since it involves the mastery of it, its own crucifixion and that of all its sinful lusts. Yet a thousand times more harshly will ring the sentence which God shall finally pronounce against it, saying: "Get thee to thy burning! Depart into everlasting fire!" *Discedite in ignem æternum!* *

What! You a pleasure-seeking man of the world! And you a woman of the world of fashion who worship your fleshly nature! You love that flesh, and yet you expose it to the most stinging and crushing blow that it can possibly encounter! You love it! And yet you risk its being flung into the flames kindled by the hot breath of God's displeasure, and fanned by the whirlwind of his wrath! You love it! And yet you render it liable to an Eternity of suffering—and such suffering!

Well, if that be love, I call it love not only of the blindest but of the maddest sort! My very heart is moved with pity for you, pity which becomes all the keener as I watch you

* S. Matt. xxv. 41.

ever more and more in love with yourselves, and yet shrinking and wincing at the slightest pin prick!

Let us, My Dear Hearers, let us treat ourselves here in this life with all Gospel-hardness; if we would have God treat us at the Day of Judgment with the fulness of His Father's love.

Let us give ourselves no quarter in anything; that He may overlook much and make allowance for more.

Let us arm ourselves *against* ourselves with the Lord's implacable justice, that He may look upon us with the eyes of His pardoning mercy.

Let us avoid His Judgment by pronouncing our own; or since we must of necessity present ourselves for sentence at God's Bar, let us by the rigour of our own judgment win for ourselves that favourable verdict which shall place the Elect of God in full possession of their Eternal Happiness!

And that is my wish, my earnest prayer to God for you all: through JESUS CHRIST. Amen.

III

EVERLASTING PAIN

BOURDALOUE

"It would seem as if no pain were without a certain alleviation unless where a moral element comes in."—*Primary Convictions*, ARCHBISHOP ALEXANDER.

NOTE

THE following Four-fold Division of this Sermon would furnish a Course on this Important Subject :—

I.—The Difficulties of the Doctrine.
II.—How Faith and Reason help us to solve them.
III.—The Practical Value of the Doctrine.
IV.—The Preacher's Own Experience.

Each Portion will last at the outside from twenty minutes to half an hour.

EVERLASTING PAIN

Tunc dixit rex ministris: Ligatis manibus et pedibus ejus, mittite eum in tenebras exteriores. Ibi erit fletus, et stridor dentium (Vulgate).

Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.—S. Matt. xxii. 13.*

PROLOGUE

THE GRIM REALITY

IT is the Sentence passed by an earthly Sovereign upon a worthless subject who had fallen under his displeasure.

Such was his method of punishing this man's audacity, who, disregarding the King's Majesty and the respect due to him, had presented himself at a Banquet without having provided himself with the Wedding Garment.

* See the Holy Gospel for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

Yet, Christian People, severe as this earthly monarch may seem, he affords but a very inadequate parallel to that Heavenly King who shall one day summon *us* to His Tribunal, there to listen to the appalling sentence of our own reprobation — should we, that is, have had the misfortune of incurring His displeasure and of falling into the hands of His Justice.

The most absolute Monarchs of this world when inflicting their severest punishments, have power only, after all, over the bodies of men—bodies which being mortal, have been already doomed to perish of their own accord.

Ligatis manibus et pedibus ! "Bind him hand and foot!" It was all that he could do.

But to carry retribution to the length of attacking the soul; to make the soul feel the power of His wrath; to rebuke and consign it to perdition, and with the one anathema to involve it in the same damnation as the body—that is the terrible and essential difference which distinguishes this dread Judge whose avenging arm falls with such deadly weight upon His enemies.

And yet, My Dear Hearers—must I say it? It is not precisely on that account: it is not because of the actual suffering of the moment to which He subjects the reprobate soul, that this Sovereign Master seems to me most to be

feared: it is from the *endless* duration of these penalties—their Eternity.

If the pains were not eternal, then there would be THE END to be hoped for; and this hope, even under the most acute suffering would be a stay, affording some relief. But pain without hope, without remedy—that is what I am about to set before you as a condition of utter and appalling misery. That is the source of those tears which never can be dried; that is the cause of the gnashing of teeth spoken of in our Gospel: There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

You see, Christian People, how important the subject is of which I am to treat to-day. I want to engage you in the contemplation of Eternal Misery; and since it is one of those foundation truths which need no buttress, I desire without the aid of Art or of the Schools, to put you in possession of the opinions most commonly held about it.

I need but the Succour of Thy Grace, O God; and I ask it through the intercession of Mary,* using the customary salutation: *Ave!*

In every age since the foundation of the Church, men have discussed the subject of Eternal Punishment; and besides the utterly godless and abandoned, who have refused to

* See Appendix of the Volume for Lent.

subscribe to this fundamental Article of Belief; there have been found, even in the midst of the Christian Society itself, feeble and faltering souls who have allowed themselves to be troubled with sundry doubts as to the eternal character of this punishment; doubts which as a natural result exert a chilling influence upon the practice and exercise of their religious life.

For once this Article of Belief begins to lose its hold upon the soul, the unfailing consequence is, that, lacking the fear of God's judgments, it becomes indifferent to the discharge of its duties, and in the end gives them up altogether.

Hence arises, My Dear Hearers, the unavoidable necessity of fortifying you against these doubts and uncertainties, which though they are often involuntary, may be productive of such disastrous consequences; and it will suffice for their extinction, simply to confront them with the fundamental principles of the Faith which we profess.

But in order to give my subject wider scope, I intend in this sermon to attack another misconception neither less common nor less worthy of censure.

It is: *To believe in Eternal Punishment, or at any rate to credit one's self with a firm belief in it—a belief perfect so far as mental acquiescence*

goes ; and yet never to reap therefrom a single good resolution ; a resolution strong enough, I mean, to influence our life and to set us more thoroughly and with greater zeal about our Christian duty. For is not this among the least justifiable of our inconsistencies ?

So then, Brethren, in order that I may state my whole plan in a couple of words, I propose to show you :

How our Faith should confirm our belief in Eternal Punishment.

That will form the FIRST PART.

And :

How a belief in Eternal Punishment, by virtue of an extremely well-balanced reaction, should provoke us to the practice of Good Works which are the Offspring of Faith.

That will be THE SECOND.

Both the one and the other demand and deserve your particular attention.

"If I am damn'd, why find I not
Some comfort in this earthly spot?
But no! this world and that to come
Are both to me one scene of gloom!

"And I was cursèd from my birth,
A reptile made to creep on earth;
A hopeless outcast, born to die
A living death eternally!
With too much conscience to have rest,
Too little to be ever blest.

"To yon vast world of endless woe
Unlighted by the cheerful day,
My soul shall wing her weary way;
To those dread depths where, aye the same,
Throughout the waste of darkness glow
The glimmerings of that boundless flame.

"For well
I know the pangs that rack me now
Are trifles, to the endless hell
That waits me, when my burning brow
And my wrung eyes shall hope in vain
For one small drop to cool the pain,
The fury of that madd'ning flame
That then shall scorch my writhing frame!" *

* Tennyson, *Remorse.*

EVERLASTING PAIN:

PART I

THE VERDICT OF FAITH AND REASON

EVERLASTING PAIN

PART I

THE VERDICT OF FAITH AND REASON

YES, Christian People, the Eternity of the Pains suffered in Hell by the reprobate is a mystery, whose acceptance appears to present great difficulties; but I add that faith in the truth of this Article should correct our errors and perfect our mental view.

Now it really does do both; and I beseech you thoroughly to take in what I mean.

God has vouchsafed to man a Revelation as full of terrors as it is worthy of respect: namely, *that each mortal sin, in its very nature, deserves to be punished with everlasting pains.* God, I say, propounds this Article of Belief to us with the full weight of His own Authority: By the mouth of His Prophet: *For their worm,* says ISAIAH, *shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.** With the pen of His Apostle: *when,*

* Isa. lxvi. 24. "What the Prophet emphasizes is the Eternal antagonism between the righteousness of God and

according to SAINT PAUL, *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of His power.** Through the Oracle of INCARNATE WISDOM: *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*† By the unanimous consensus of the WHOLE CHURCH which has always understood Holy Scripture in this wise; by the DECREES OF COUNCILS which expressly declare it; by the tradition of the Old Law as well as that of the New, which has always held the same language concerning this important doctrine. Lastly, by every precept of the Faith, which announces a penalty eternal in its duration as due to a single sin, even to the

man's unrighteousness, and this involves the punishment of the latter as long as it exists."—E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D. (*Ellicot's Comm.*).

* 2 Thess. i. 7, etc. "As for the word 'everlasting' (or '*eternal*,' for it is the same which is used, *e.g.*, Heb. vi. 2), it would certainly convey to Saint Paul's readers the notion of *incessant duration in time*. It is of course only an adaptation of human language to speak of time at all in such a case, as we cannot tell what may take the place of time in the next dispensation; however, as far as the actual words go, there is nothing in these passages (S. Matt. xviii. 8; xxv. 41, 46; S. Mark i iii. 29; Heb. vi. 2; S. Jude, 7) to suggest any future alteration in the state of the lost."—*Ibid.*

† S. Matt. xxv. 41.

sin of a moment, when that sin goes the length of separating us from God, and of severing the sacred bond which should make us one with Him.

Can there be, then, any truth more firmly established than this is?

And yet with regard to this aforesaid Truth, this Revelation put forth by so High an Authority, the mind of man has frequently created difficulties; or, to speak more plainly, has made mistakes.

If he accepts the doctrine, then he anxiously searches about for some method of reasoning, by means of which he can accommodate to his own satisfaction the glaring disproportion between an eternity of suffering and a moment of sin!

And how can Faith help us? Why should it help us?

I have told you already, and I will now repeat it. Faith should correct these mistakes of ours, as being opposed to Primitive Truth which has been revealed to us once for all; and it should strengthen and develope into noon-day clearness that twilight which affords us some dim outline of a Mystery so far beyond the limit of our human vision and of the range of our unaided powers of knowing. Such is the plain purpose of this FIRST PART; which will comprise the fullest particulars concerning the theory of God's Judgment.

Now pay attention to what I have to say. We take no notice, then, of atheism, which, denying the existence of any God whatever, denies consequently that of any possible Inflicter of Everlasting Pain. Neither will we stop to discuss the irreligious system of Epicurus; which, making the soul die with the body, destroys the object capable of undergoing this Eternal Punishment.

But here are Three Erroneous Opinions less gross and, at first sight, more reasonable which conflict with the belief in Everlasting Pain on the score of its disproportion to the offence of which it is the punishment.

1. Some have held that an eternity of punishment, be the offence never so gross, is inconsistent with the Loving-kindness of God.
2. Others have urged that it furthermore infringes the laws of His Justice.
3. Others, again, taking a bolder view, have imagined it to lie beyond the Power of the Almighty.

God, say the First, *is too kind* to avenge through endless ages what occupied but a moment of time.*

God, say the Second, *is too righteous* to avenge throughout endless ages what occupied but a moment of time.

* See Appendix.

God, say the Third, *has not the power* to make any creature go on existing for a whole Eternity in pain and suffering.

These are their arguments.

"Now in what sense do we assert that God is supremely good" (it is the excellent remark of Tertullian) "if it be not that He holds evil in supreme abhorrence? And what does holding evil in supreme abhorrence mean on God's part, if it be not to pursue it without remorse, and to become its implacable avenger." Such is the drift of his reasoning against Marcion.* "Understand, therefore, O Man" (it is still Tertullian who is speaking), "understand what is meant by a God that is *Good*. It means a God who is opposed by His very nature to Evil, a God who is always the Antagonist of Evil, and, by a necessary consequence, a God who is the Eternal Persecutor and Punisher of Evil. And this so thoroughly that He would cease to be God, if for one instant He failed to take action against evil, with a view of denouncing and punishing it; because He would no longer be

* The problem as to the origin of Evil which exercised the minds of heretics produced the Dogmas of Marcion. Not only did he reject the Old Testament, but he attributed its authority to a deity different from and opposed to the Author of the New. The former he characterized as the *just*, meaning thereby the stern, severe, and merciless; the other, the *good;* that is the benevolent and merciful God—*Le Bon Dieu*, in fact! and alas! *See* Bishop Wordsworth's *Church History*, vol. i. chap. xv. Tertullian lived 200 A.D.

Good after the manner in which He actually and essentially *is* Good, and in which He must be so.

"But what is it that the sinner wants? Fashioning his ideas of Goodness in the interests of his passions, he needs a God with whose sanction wrong-doing may be left to enjoy some intervals of happiness and peace. And he would say that *that* God was Good who made men bad by some assurance of future forgiveness.

"Hence," still continues Tertullian, "you refuse to recognize that quality of goodness whose essential characteristic is to be unable ever to come to terms with evil, but to hold it in everlasting detestation. Yet although *you* decline to recognize it, yet all the Saints, and every individual who ever deserved the name of one of the Faithful—souls well versed in the things of God; all these have recognized it; have solemnly and boldly confessed it and gloried in it; because, being enlightened by a wisdom loftier than yours always shining upon them from on high, they saw clearly that the goodness of God must be of that sort, and that according to the laws of holiness, it could be of no other."

Ascending to the source of the error I am combating, I may say: that it was Origen*

* Origen, 185 A.D. He went to the extreme of allegorizing Holy Scripture. Jerome said of him: "He makes his own

who first showed a tendency to make God out to be more merciful than He by nature is; or, rather, who (as Saint Augustine puts it) wanted to make out that he himself was more merciful than God, when he declared that *after a certain length of time the pains endured by the souls of the Reprobate should cease:* a heresy of which he was the author and for which the Church smote him with her anathemas.

Do not fail to notice at the same time, Christian People, the prodigious confusion which involves the human intellect when it is no longer guided by Faith.

This same Origen who, led by an overweening sense of the Goodness and Loving-kindness of God, would not have it that the pains of the damned should last for ever—by another error on the opposite side, which from its new point of view proceeded to assign limitations to the *mercy* of God—allowed himself to be carried the length of maintaining *that the Glory of the Blessed also had its term;* and that just as the Reprobate shall one day pass out of a state of suffering into a condition of ease, so should the Saints who reign with God exchange

fancies to be Sacraments of the Church." His subjective method of scriptural interpretation betrayed him into erroneous teaching on future rewards and punishments (which latter he supposed to be remedial) and on the final salvability of Satan and his angels.—*Church History*, WORDSWORTH.

from time to time, by a melancholy and monstrous twist of things, their condition of ease for one of suffering; that thus they may be always purifying themselves more and more and so at length discharge themselves fully and finally of all the old liabilities contracted here below.

There, you see, resumes Saint Augustine, how this man who showed himself such a sturdy champion of the Divine Mercy on the one hand, was assaulting it on the other; thereby losing the advantage which he prided himself upon, in being its zealous partisan. For while on this side he holds out to the Reprobate a false hope of future beatitude, he takes away on the other from the souls of the Predestinate the solid assurance that their bliss shall last for ever.

But Origen might still retort: "What business then have we to extol as highly as we do the loving-kindness of our God who is the Creator of the Universe, if long ages of penal suffering are not sufficient in His sight to expiate a single crime nor yet to extinguish the fierceness of His wrath?"

"Ah!" cries Saint Gregory, "Man is always cunning enough in drawing conclusions from God's goodness which tell against God Himself. While I, for my part, reply by asking: Why then does Scripture assault our ears with so many thunder-threats of judgment, consigning the sinner to this awful Eternity of Punishment,

if there be still room for the supposition that he is not bound to suffer after all?"

"Strange!" adds this Great Pope, "that we should give ourselves the trouble to guarantee God's goodness, and then proceed without a shudder to make Him the father of a lie in order to save His reputation for clemency; as if He were less true to His word than He is tender in His judgments.

The same Scripture in fact which teaches me that God has bowels of mercies with which He yearns over all mankind, tells me also that He has Everlasting Flames already lighted for the torment of sinners. I am no more at liberty to doubt the latter statement than I am the former, but I must by means of the one, dispel the prejudices by which I allow myself to be misled with regard to the other.

For instead of arguing that *God is the Source of all goodness and loving-kindness, and that therefore He cannot punish sin for ever*, I ought to argue like this: *God will punish sin for ever although He is the Source of all goodness and loving-kindness — nay, Goodness and Loving-kindness itself! For Faith teaches me so, and it is a Fundamental Truth of my Religion.*"

So that the goodness of God in nowise precludes Eternal Punishment; neither does Eternal Punishment in any way contravene the goodness of God.

But whence and how to reconcile in the one God that supreme Goodness with this extreme Severity! Well, it is not a problem that I am called upon to solve. It is a Truth that I am bound to believe. Enough for me to know both with absolute certainty; since both are things revealed to me by the Spirit of God. There I hold me, and any further I am not prepared to go!

It is not, that, without diminishing by some moments, few or many, the duration of the pains of hell, I must utterly fail to understand all that I know and all that I believe about God's *goodness*.*

It is not, that it would be difficult for me to comprehend how goodness—already so much the declared enemy of sin as to have caused a God to come down upon earth to destroy it; to have induced Him to clothe Himself with our flesh; to take upon Him all our sorrows, and to die upon a cross—is still sufficiently its enemy to determine Him; to determine, that is, this same God so Holy and so Good, *never* to come to terms with it, *never* to give it any quarter: which indeed would not be altogether unreasonable on His part. Yet, after all, the shortest way, and on the whole the safest, is to treat this Mystery reverently, and without inquiring into it; contenting myself with

* Human frailty translates *goodness* into *kindness*, though to be *kind* is not always to be *good*.

the evidence afforded to me by Faith, which evidence I am unable to gainsay.

In its intuition and discernment Faith is infallible. Its immediate consciousness is quicker and keener in its action than any process of the reasoning faculty.*

When, therefore, Faith causes me to recognize in God this absolute goodness, and yet makes known to me at the same time the doctrine of Everlasting Misery; or when in revealing the fact of Everlasting Misery it none the less makes me recognize in God the quality of absolute goodness—well, there I have more than enough to cancel all my doubts; and thus it is, Christian People, that Faith corrects the first mistake that is made touching the Everlasting Punishment of every impenitent and reprobate sinner.†

Let us pass on to the Second.

2. It is: *That Eternal Punishment is incompatible with God's Justice.*

Why so?

Because, say you, the quality of Justice consists in apportioning the penalty to the offence;

* "Mind is more than reason, and the proof by intuitive reason or 'faith' is as real as that of pure reason and mathematical demonstration. This is not the subterfuge of the theologian, but the conclusion of such philosophers as Kant, Jacobi, Hamilton, and Mansel."—From *Church Times'* Review of Professor Sneath's *Mind of Tennyson*, Dec. 14, 1900.

† Namely, that God is *too kind*.

so that neither the offence by its gravity should outweigh the penalty, nor the penalty by its rigour be too great for the offence. Now, where, you ask, is this equality—this proportion—between an Eternity of Punishment and a few days, a few hours, perhaps a single moment of sin?

Had I, My Dear Hearers, to demonstrate this Article of the Faith otherwise than by Faith itself, I might answer you that if between the Penalty and the sin there should lack the proportion of *duration;* yet that there might be, as in fact there is, some proportion between the malignant spirit shown by the latter and the satisfaction and punishment wrought by the former: between the *malice* of the sin and the *retribution* of its punishment.

I will explain.

What misleads us is our tendency to measure the *duration* of the penalty which God inflicts with the *duration* of the criminal act committed by the sinner, and whereby he incurred his guilt. A faulty method of procedure, says Saint Augustine; and in order clearly to perceive its fallacy we have only to consider what happens daily in the course and procedure of *human* justice.

For in what does the ignominy of any shameful punishment consist? What is the nature of that stain which it leaves on the character,

and which can never be wiped out? What causes the aching vacuity of exile, of transportation, or of imprisonment for life? Is not such a period, so far as it can be, an Eternity in miniature? *

Now, we see that human Justice employs all these methods against an act of violence almost as soon committed and over as it was conceived and attempted. And yet when, in order to avenge an assault, often as briefly premeditated as it was swiftly accomplished, she adopts such extreme measures as these, we never notice anything about the punishment that seems too heavy for the offence.

But human justice goes further than this.

For, asks Saint Augustine once more, How about that Penalty of Death—*Death* which is of all the terrible things in nature the most terrible: Death which, in putting an end to him, seizes amid his good-things-temporal, that good thing which man prizes more dearly than them all, namely his Life! *Death*, whose stroke is irrevocable, and its consequences, by the same rule, Eternal?

And yet, even when it happens to be the penalty of crimes never so brief, never so sudden, it is, notwithstanding, the particular we approve, the particular we admire in the wisdom and equity of human law.

* See *Five Years of My Life*, by Captain Dreyfus.

It is true, continues the same Father—and his remark is especially pertinent to my subject —it is true that the *sensation* of this penalty of death passes away ; but its *effect* does not pass off at all : and this is the chief aim and end that the Law has in view. For note carefully, that the first and most immediate intention of the law is not to torment for a certain length of time the criminal against whom she launches her verdict ; but by this irrevocable decree to reach forward into the future : her principal object being to cut him off for evermore from any further intercourse with the living, a privilege which he has been deemed unworthy to enjoy.

There you have the words of this Holy Doctor. Whence it follows that to estimate the proportion of the penalty to the offence, the criterion to be taken must not always be the duration of the one or the other ; so that with regard to never-ending punishment inflicted for a sin whose end came so quickly and whose intoxication was so brief, the Justice of Heaven may well claim exemption from all cavil or reproach.

That, I repeat, Christian People, is the answer I should have to give you, and which would present, if not a convincing proof, at least one of the strongest and clearest probabilities.

But that is not the line of argument I have

laid down for myself to take; so, not forsaking my plan, I now come back to The Faith.*

What, then, does The Faith† teach me? TWO THINGS: *First*, that God is righteous. *Secondly*, that His vengeance is eternal.

Concerning either of these verities Faith cannot mislead me, seeing that they are simply utterances of Primeval Truth Itself. *Consequently*, these Twin Facts cannot be irreconcilable, but should agree together perfectly. *Consequently again*, the pains of the damned must persist in all their Eternity; while the Justice of God subsists in all its integrity.

But what am I saying! Why, this very Eternity of punishment is the manifestation of Divine Justice; for the pains of the damned are everlasting only because God *is* Just, and in so far *as* He is Just. *Consequently*, once more, when I am confronted with this Doctrine of Eternal Pain, I have no right to conclude that God is unjust; because there can be no injustice in what it has pleased the Just One Himself to fix and determine: *Nihil injustum esse potest, quod placet justo.*‡

The conclusion, rather, which I am bound to

* End of Part I. of Fourfold Division.

† The Faith = what we have to believe. Faith = the mental act whereby we believe it.

‡ S. Augustine.

come to is that of Saint Ambrose, namely: That sin must be the greatest of all evils since so just a God punishes it with the heaviest of all penalties: that sin * must further present an inexhaustible source of mischief, if, in the judgment even of Sovereign Righteousness, it needs a whole Eternity to compensate it: and that the world must be uncommonly blind to regard sin with so much indifference, and to show so little fear; since a single sin is enough to consign it to the lowest depths of misery, never to return. *That*, and *all* that! Founded upon the unquestionable and immovable principles of religious belief.

3. Well, what else does there remain for Faith, so sound and so enlightened, to accomplish?

Just to correct the *Third* Mistake: which *denies to God the power of visiting upon one and the same being this Everlasting Retribution*, or of keeping it always and equally alive to the cruel contact—the scorching embrace—of the burning flames: the most vain and frivolous error of all the three; for any one, that is, who has formed an adequate conception of a God that is Almighty.

Just as if God could not communicate to the

* See S. Mark iii. 29 (R.V.): "Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an Eternal Sin."

fire (which He has chosen to be the vehicle of His wrath) certain particular properties over and above those found in the ordinary course of Nature. Just as if God, who out of nothing has created all things, and who by a simple effort of His will upholds them all (as Faith teaches us)—just as if He could lack power or virtue to maintain the full activity of the fire without feeding or fuel. Just as if it would be difficult for God, having created body and soul, to render the one as incorruptible as the other, without at the same time allowing the body to become devoid of sensation any more than the soul; and to keep them together in the flames so that they may both feel their ardent heat without experiencing the slightest mitigation. Just as if *that* would be any greater miracle for God to work than all those many startling wonders which Faith sets forth before our eyes, and for the performance of which she gives us to understand that nothing more was needed than "The Finger of God." *Digitus Dei est hic.** What must it be then, when He puts forth the whole strength of His arm and lets it fall full-weight upon these rebellious creatures whom He would smite with His vengeance! How terrible to find out by one's own experience and in one's own person what it actually is! *Brachium Domini cui revelatum est?* †

* Exod. viii. 19. † Isa. liii. 1.

Ah! My Dear Hearers, let us not waste our time in the discussion of idle questions, or by indulging in researches dangerous in their tendency to undermine that wholesome, holy fear which a Christian temper should quicken within us. We will believe; and to the Loving-kindness of our God; to His Justice, as to His Power, we will ascribe with trembling awe that honour which is due. To our heart's perturbed pulsations we will give no heed. Having deceived itself, it would deceive us also. Perplexed at the contemplation of Everlasting Pain," it feels the presence of this perplexity as that of some unaccommodating guest who interferes with its self-willed and self-indulgent impulses. Hence it struggles by every means in its power to throw off this yoke: cunningly contriving a thousand subtleties whereby it may evade the insistence of Essential Truth.

But, dropping argument, let us proceed to action. It is neither what we think nor what we say that will guarantee our immunity from the impact of God's judgment. What *will* shield us from it is the *docility of our faith and the holiness of our life and work.* That we shall find to be—and I can say it without fear of stirring a breath of controversy from any quarter—*that* we shall find to be our wisest policy, since it is certainly the safest and the surest.

At the same time, I have no intention of asserting that our *Reason* may not be consulted in the matter, so long as it is reason in subjection to Faith. Indeed, I have no fear whatever in allowing Reason to speak out here, and to set in array all the material she can muster in order to justify the procedure of Almighty God, especially in the promulgation of this Decree, which, in declaring the sinner reprobate, condemns him to Everlasting Punishment.

For here, Christian People, you have the terrible Mystery which from the earliest to the latest times has exercised the minds of the Church's greatest scholars: men the most deeply versed in things Divine. And although, of course, the Lord's verdict has no need to appeal to man for its vindication, since it is itself its own adequate justification, as says the Prophet,* *Judicia Domini vera, justificata in semetipsa.* Yet these Holy Doctors have always held that with regard to the doctrine of the Everlasting Punishment of the Reprobate, it is well to look into all concurrent testimony, and for that very purpose to make use of all the lights and of all the

* Ps. xix. 9 (P.B.V.): "The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether." LXX. (Ps. xviii.) Τα κρίματα Κυρίου ἀληθινὰ δεδικαιωμένα ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτο.

Consider the case of King and Rebel. two mutually exclusive terms. King cannot for *one moment* tolerate Rebel, which simply is to say that he must *eternally* crush him. A repentant Rebel is a Rebel no longer.

arguments with which the human intellect can furnish us.

It is probable that you have already met with the arguments which I have now to bring forward; but perhaps, on the other hand, I may be able to put them before you in quite a different light from that in which they have been presented by others. For my purpose in producing them is not so much that you may feel their intrinsic force, as that they may lead you to observe how they themselves may be developed and matured by Faith.

To this I am pledged; and the subject may well demand your renewed attention.

Well, the First Argument shall be from Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine.

"Yes, Brethren," says Saint Jerome, "the wilful sinner is bound to render satisfaction to God because *his disposition is to resist God's will eternally.*" * This thought is true and sound; but that we may thoroughly take it in, let us listen to Saint Augustine, who has been at the pains to make it clear, and to place it before us in the strongest light.

For, as this Holy Doctor excellently remarks, in dealing with a perverse and criminal will, it is

* A child once said: "There must be only very few people in Tophet; only those I should think who *won't* be sorry for what they have done."—*Children's Sayings*, W. CANTON.

not precisely the *effect* of that *will's* action which is to be looked at, but more particularly the will itself—the *motive* which *affects* the heart; and although (as it does not depend upon man) the *effect* may be sometimes lacking altogether; yet it is just and right that the *affection* or *intention* should be punished; and that it should be punished with a penalty proportionate to its mischievous tendency: *Merito malus punitur* affectus, *etiam enim non succedit* effectus.

I now call as witness the Conscience of the Sinner. Is it not certain that these lovers of themselves and of the world—slaves as they are of pleasure and of their sensual appetites—is it not certain that all these sinners, sold under sin, find themselves (as they stand before God the Searcher of Hearts and of their most hidden tendencies) to be *so* inclined, that they would never wish to leave this present life, whose counterfeit goods are so mightily to their taste; that here they would stay to enjoy for ever the same darling objects of their inordinate affection, and that for this they would willingly give up all *other* and *future* happiness whatever?

If, therefore, the Act of sin does not last, yet the *Love of sin and the attachment to what is evil is,* in a sense, *everlasting;* insomuch that there is hidden within the disposition of the sinner a secret will, or to speak the language of the Schools, a constructive will or determination *to*

be a sinner for ever; since he longs always to possess the means of gratifying his sinful cravings.

Furthermore—it is the remark of Pope Saint Gregory—if we duly consider the case of ungodly people, including all that we understand by the term "wilful sinner"; they cease from sinning only, in fact, because they cease to live, and their wish would be that they might never stop sinning. If they do desire to live, it is not, strictly speaking, for the sake of living, but for the sake of sinning; for without sinning this life which is so precious to them and so dear, would be dull and tiresome. There exists therefore all necessary proportion between this Eternity of Punishment and the Sinfulness of their hearts; nor need we be so very much surprised that the punishment should be without end when the yearning for evil is without limit.

But this is not enough. Saint Thomas * adds a Second Argument. It is, says this Angelic Doctor, that *be the disposition of the man who commits the sin what it may with regard to the inclination of his will; it is, notwithstanding, clear to me, that the* mischief *of the sin is in its nature irreparable;* and that, being irreparable, it is in a *sense*, eternal; *and for that very particular deserves eternal punishment.*

Give this thought your diligent study, Christian

* Aquinas.

People. Every Mortal Sin * once committed, can only obtain remission in one of two ways: Either on the sinner's side, by means of satisfaction worthy of God's acceptance; or else, on God's side, by the surrender of all His rights and interests.

That the sinner—I mean, of course, the Reprobate Sinner—should render adequate satisfaction to Almighty God is exactly what he is incapable of doing, since he has been deprived of all Grace. That God should waive His rights, is what He is in no way bound to do, and what no one can demand of Him. So long, therefore, as the rules of Justice have to be maintained and complied with, this sin can never throughout the whole of Eternity stop or undo its own mischief; Sin it is, and sin it must continue to be for ever.

Wherefore, concludes this Angel of the Schools, so long as sin remains uncompensated for by any reparation, it must still deserve and bear its punishment; and the duration of the penalty

* Sins may be of greater or lesser degree. Sins which are committed without full knowledge of their sinfulness in God's sight, or without full consent of the will, are *lesser* sins, but which, if unchecked, may lead to *greater* sins: such, that is, as are committed against light and grace, and which are called *deadly* or *mortal* sins. It is this latter class which alone *merit* everlasting punishment. Our Lord thus distinguishes between the two: He that is bathed (*i.e.* washed from deadly sin) needeth not but daily, hourly, washing from venial and pardonable sins.—S. John xiii. 10.

must correspond with the duration of the offence.

Furthermore: and this is the Third Argument; one which the Theologians who came after Saint Augustine derive from sin's own nature. What is Sin? *Sin is self-banishment from God.* It is to treat Him with deliberate disdain. It is to subject the Majesty of God to a most outrageous affront.

This being accepted as a truth universally recognized, let us measure the gravity of this affront by the dignity of the Master whom it affects, and we shall find that it is infinite as regards its Object, since it inflicts a wound upon Infinite Greatness Itself.*

Now a sin of which the mischief is infinite,

* Compare HOOKER. Book V., Appendix I.

"That justice which worketh by way of vengeance, proportioneth punishment unto sin. And Sin hath two measures whereby the justness thereof is judged. The object, God, against whom, and the subject, that creature in whom sin is. By the one measure all sin is infinite, because He is infinite whom sin offendeth; for which cause there is one eternal punishment due to all sins."

Hooker and his works were known and honoured by such as Queen Elizabeth and James II. Charles I. enjoined his son, Charles II., to be studious in Mr. Hooker's books (see Walton's *Life*). James II., who said they turned him into a papist, certainly took with him, if not the works themselves, at all events an intimate knowledge of them, to the Court of Louis XIV. (1689). It should be interesting to learn how far Bourdaloue and the other great French Preachers of the day were acquainted with them.

Hooker lived A.D. 1553–1600. Bourdaloue A.D. 1632–1704.

demands and deserves an infinite penalty. In what way, therefore, can this penalty be made infinite? Can it be so in itself, or of its own accord? Impossible. It is what no created matter can ever find itself in a condition to be, to do, or to suffer. It remains therefore that this punishment be made an infinite punishment, so far as it can be so (I refer to its infinite *duration*), and that it should stretch on into the measureless ages of futurity.

That is the only way in which God can obtain satisfaction for Himself. Without this Eternity there would always be an infinite *dis*proportion between the offence and its penalty; but by means of this Eternal duration, although God can never be adequately compensated (because the penalty being due for ever can never be fully paid); yet there will be between the punishment and the sin all the correspondence possible.

These, and such as these, Dear Hearers, have been, as I said, the results of the speculations of the human mind upon this momentous topic of Everlasting Pain.*

* "Think, for example, of the doctrine of the *everlastingness* of future misery. I find that to be most beautiful and essential. To give that up while men are thinking as they do of this life as probation, I think would be an irremediable loss. Do not you see now that means truly the ETERNALNESS of the punishment. Now when it is interpreted, and our thoughts have righted themselves, we see that it is but the necessary form in

Such are the conclusions that have been reached by those sublime intellects which God filled with the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. These are the discoveries they made; and these the lights whose leading they were bound to follow. We must respect their opinions since their foundations are sound. We will adopt their views, for they commend themselves to us as being strictly just, as they are wholly reverent.*

Yet, after all,—they may as well confess it—*Faith* must come to the rescue of their reasoning and round it to perfection. Their arguments

which the fact that *wickedness* is the true damnation expresses itself. Damnation IS eternal—*i.e.* it is actual and spiritual, not sensational. While the general perversion of thought lasts, by which the eternal is made to *mean a temporal continuance*, it is right and necessary to hold the misery of the wicked everlasting."—*Letters of Dr. James Hinton.*

* As another illustration of this let us mark the following assertion of possible and probable Eternity (whether for good or evil): "The student of nature who starts from the axiom of the universality of the law of causation cannot refuse to admit an eternal existence; if he admits the conservation of energy; if he admits the existence of immaterial phenomena in the form of consciousness, he must admit the possibility, at any rate, of an eternal series of such phenomena; and, if his studies have not been barren of the best fruit of investigation of nature, he will have enough sense to see that when Spinoza says, 'Per Deum intelligo eum absolute infinitum, hoc est substantiam constantem infinitis attributis,' the God so conceived is one that only a very great fool would deny, even in his heart. Physical science is as little Atheistic as it is Materialistic."—*Science and Morals*, PROFESSOR HUXLEY.

stand in need of its confirming power. Now, would you know *how* Faith completes and confirms them?

Ah! Christian People, that is one of those secrets known only to the humble and to those who are the Faithful indeed. For if Faith does give to all this knowledge a special force and finish, it is not through the medium of any process which may puff up our minds, but rather by means of humbling them. It is not by allowing them the pride-fostering liberty to speculate and to argue, but by subjecting them to the authority and to the mysterious vagueness of the Word of God; it is not by drawing aside the veil which it hangs before our eyes, thus to confront us with the truth in all its naked brightness; but it is by leaving us face to face with all our difficulties and perplexities with just this simple ejaculation of Saint Paul, which with a word dispels all our doubts and determines each perplexity: *O altitudo!** O depth! O Judgments of my God! O riches and resources unseen and inexhaustible, not merely of wisdom and of mercy but of justice! I can, of course, catch a few superficial glimpses of it all; but is it for me to sound the depth? *quàm incomprehensibilia sunt judicia ejus!*

* Rom. xi. 33: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"

Were I to attempt a thousand times to fathom this great deep; yet if I did not want to lose myself and perish in the vast, I had better always hie me back to the beginner's starting-point and humbly cry: *O Altitudo!* O Depth! A consummation, Fellow Christians, admirable and blessed beyond measure!

The moment that Faith lends us this preparation of heart and meekness of spirit; then it comes to pass, that being ready to make a clean sweep of all our former arguments, and to remove them altogether, we find ourselves able to reason more clearly than before. Here is the proof.

Free, for the first time, from our prejudices, and no longer disposed to hug those darling opinions of ours with such tenacious obstinacy, we behold with finer eye, we judge with deeper insight the lofty conceptions which Faith affords us of the Majesty of God; of His Goodness and Loving-kindness; of His Justice and His Holiness; and consequently, too, of man's effrontery in exalting himself by the commission of sin against Universal and Infinite Majesty; of his audacious wickedness, and of the corruption of his heart which outrages by its sinful affections Inflexible Justice and Eternal Holiness, the natural foes of all disorder. The vision, I say, of those grand spiritual objects, being no longer

blurred either by the preconceived notions of an ill-disciplined mind, or by the blinding fumes rising from the passion-heated furnace of the heart—are beheld in their awe-inspiring grandeur and can make themselves felt with unobstructed force.

We are able to comprehend them with less trouble. Indeed there are moments when we seem to see them with the mind's eye, clear and distinct before us ; when the soul is possessed and filled with a sense of reality beyond description : moments when, methinks, I see Eternity stretched out before my eyes, reaching from everlasting to everlasting.

I trace its course throughout its whole immense expanse. I see it, as far as the feebleness of my mental faculties permits, in all its horror ; and instead of diverting myself with vain discussions, I think only of humbling myself under God's Almighty Hand, and of how to prevent, how to avert His tremendous judgments.

I will say with upright Job : *Vere scio quod ita sit* * : Yes ! That *so*, that thus, it *is ;* for thus does the word of my God certify it to be. So the wisest course for me to follow is, not to take part in hoarse disputes or stubborn controversy concerning the veracity of the Divine Oracle ;

* Job v. 27 : "Lo this, we have searched it, so it is." They are, however, the words of Eliphaz.—TR.

but to devise some sound and solid means of avoiding the frightful ills against which it forewarns me.

All that I have to do, then, is to fling myself at my Judge's feet—to lie there before Him in Holy fear and trembling, and to move Him by the humble spirit and holy fervour of my prayers.

Were I the most just of men, that is the frame of mind which should be mine; and in that frame of mind I had best keep myself till life's last breath: "Whom though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but make supplication to my judge." *Etiam si habuero quippiam justum non respondebo, sed judicem meum deprecator.**

That, moreover, is what I feel myself prompted to say, and thither all my meditations lead me. Such is the wholesome work of Faith: of a faith reasonable but at the same time meek: which through this spirit of meekness and devotion becomes a thousandfold more enlightened than all the knowledge, together with all the wisdom of the world: faith docile and dutiful which is upheld by the hidden hand of God, a Faith, moreover, that He uplifts and cheers by some rare sun-gleams of His grace, and to which He reveals the most unfathomable Mysteries.

* Job ix. 15.

Such has ever been the belief, the faith of the Saints. Was it narrow-mindedness on their part? Was it so much superstition? What! Has not their transcendent genius become a household word? Can we plead ignorance of what universal Antiquity thought of those Great Men whom it revered as its Masters and Teachers, and whom we to-day put forward as our models and our guides? What they believed may not *we* just as well believe, too!

Or shall we be warranted when we stand before God's judgment seat in addressing Him thus: "My Lord, I never paid the slightest attention to this Eternity question. I never so much as gave it a thought; because I did not believe a word of it!"

No! You didn't believe a word of it! And why not? Why, because you didn't want to believe it; for you used to make out that you didn't believe it, so that it might not disturb your enjoyment of a disorderly life. Such is the common method with unbelief.

But, after all, My Dear Hearers, whether you believe it or not, the fact is not less certain. The proofs which should have convinced you are no less sound. And therein lies your condemnation.

But this is not our final goal. We have seen how Faith should confirm in us the belief in Everlasting Pain; and we are now about to

learn how a belief in Everlasting Pain should encourage us to work the works of Faith and to practise all that holiness of life which Faith demands on our side.*

It will form the SECOND PART.

* End of Part II. of Fourfold Division.

EVERLASTING PAIN:

PART II

THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE DOCTRINE

EVERLASTING PAIN

PART II

THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE DOCTRINE

IN the whole realm of Cause and Effect there are no consequences so direct and so equitable as those which are about to serve as the subject matter of this SECOND PART ;* in which I have to show you how our belief in the doctrine of Everlasting Pain ought to excite in us the utmost enthusiasm for the practice of Christian duty, and lead us to a thorough reform of our manner of life.

For this Everlasting Fire—these Flames of Hell—or, if you prefer it, this fire of the life to come—ought at all events to extinguish a fire in this present life which now corrupts and consumes us—the fire of our ill-regulated passions ; and it should at the same time kindle another ; that of an active Charity, and of a holy zeal for the betterment of our entire behaviour : a

* *Third* of Fourfold Division.

consequence which follows from two personal motives.

The First is that of Self-Love; I mean that reasonable love of self, that Christian love of self which even God demands, and which should keep alive and active within us the instinct of self-preservation by every means in our power from the most tremendous of all calamities. The other is (according to the Rule of our Religion) the Indispensable Necessity of a Holy Life; a life, that is, either of Innocence or of Repentance, which shall guarantee our immunity from that disastrous climax, and prevent us from entering upon those conditions of existence which would involve the passing of that appalling Sentence.

And, indeed, little as we love ourselves in the way we are commanded to do so; yet what is there that we have to fear more than this? What is there that we ought to avoid with greater care than our own irreparable loss? See how much we do every day for the sake of our natural bodily life! We are bound up in it, frail and mortal thing that it is! And, *therefore*, Do we consider any price too high to pay for its preservation? Is there a danger we would refuse to face? Is there any remedy that we are not prepared to try? Is there a single precaution we should fail to take? Any expense we should grudge? Any extremity

to which we would not reduce ourselves? Any pleasure we would not forgo? What attention! What watchfulness! What a determination to try everything and to undergo anything! And all for what? Why in order not to lose a life which is but fleeting at the best; and to stave off a death which is in any case inevitable and of which the pain is felt but for a few moments. Whence it becomes easy to estimate the impression which should be produced upon our feelings (and with far greater reason) by a fear of Eternal Death and of final reprobation, whereby man, cast out by God, and given over without resource to the plagues of the most rigorous justice, shall continue to exist throughout endless ages, living only that he may suffer.

If the blindness of our spiritual sight has not yet gone the length of making us utterly *forgetful* of ourselves, what is there that we ought to set about with greater ardour than the task of obtaining some shelter for our souls from so far-reaching a fatality, and of saving them from ruin? Now, as you know, there is no other means of doing this, but by forsaking sin, by renouncing the world, by serving God and keeping His Commandments, and by the practice of all those Christian duties which sanctify us in God's sight and continue us in His favour.

Here, then, you have my statement proved, *namely:* that a Belief in the doctrine of Everlasting Punishment is the most powerful incentive we can have either to resume or to maintain a life of discipline, and to live as Christians ought to live.

Show me the most hardened sinner in the world, and I defy him to refute my argument.

But in order to develope this point, which it is so profitable for us to meditate upon, and whose extreme importance demands our concentrated attention, I will maintain that in this belief in Everlasting Pain we find a motive at once the most universal and most obvious for the correction of all the irregularities of our life, and for not omitting any detail of conduct, which, according to the Gospel, can steady or speed us on our Godward way.

Mind, I do not say the *highest* motive; but I simply say, to start with, the most *universal.* For among all the motives which may actuate a Christian Soul, and which may influence its conduct and its actions, I admit that this one—although according to the Council of Trent it partakes of the divine and the supernatural—is, after all, *the least elevated of any.*

Nevertheless, without being of the same degree of excellence as the others, I aver that it possesses this advantage over them, namely that it is better adapted to all sorts and conditions of minds,

and, so, more extended than any other in its reach and influence.

What I mean is this :—

It is very true that to tear one's self away from sin, and after long wandering, to come back to God ; to give one's self to the performance of one's duties and prosecute them with a view to the reward thereto attached—which is none other than God Himself : those certainly are motives of a superior order and much more worthy of the Christian Spirit.

But it is no less true that all men are not equally apt to be affected by those feelings, nor to let themselves be moved by such utterly single-hearted, God-inspired views. There are, of course, the Righteous, the fervent, the perfect ones, who, like children in their Father's House, are anxious to please Him ; who long to please Him merely for the sake of pleasing Him and loving Him ; and who, in the same way, being full of zeal and animation, become everlastingly enamoured of His divine precepts ; whose strictest law is His slightest wish ; and who serve Him with the service of filial affection.

But there are, *besides*, the lax, the worldly, and the wicked. There are those characters, of the earth earthy, men who are utter materialists, of whom Saint Paul spoke ; and who are scarcely susceptible of any impression but that of fear

of God's judgments and the dread of His vengeance.

Talk to those men of the Greatness of God, of the Perfection of God—of His Benefits: even of His *Rewards:* and they will barely listen to what you have to say. Should they however vouchsafe you some of their attention, all that you do manage to convey to them merely strikes upon their ear without getting down into their hearts.

And why is this?

Because those hearts of theirs clouded with the blackness of darkness shed abroad by their passions, and filled with the foulest imaginations, have become, to use the Apostle's word, *animalized.* Now, the animal man, adds this same Doctor of the Gentiles, cannot discern the mysteries of God; or only as far as they can be grasped sensually: *Animalis autem homo non percipit ea, quæ sunt Spiritus Dei.** "Now, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

* 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The *animalis homo* of the Vulgate is quite unobjectionable, and corresponds exactly enough to the ψυχίκος of the Greeks, as the *anima* of the Latins is nearly equivalent to the Psyche or vital principal of the Greek. In our version, as in Luther's, the *psychical* is translated as the *natural* man. That is not a bad translation if we bear in mind the equivocal use of the word *nature*, that it either may mean the course of things as they are, or the course of things as they ought to be. It is in the former sense only that man is *natural* or in a state of nature (*i.e.* nature *fallen*).—HEARD: *Tripartite Nature of Man*, cap. v.

How, then, are you to move them? How are you to stir them up, to wake them out of this lethargic slumber in which they lie so deeply sunk?

Why, by making their ears tingle with the thunders of God's wrath, as they reverberate in the stunning sentence that shall one day consign them to everlasting flames: *Discedite a me maledicti in ignem æternum!* Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire! * Get them to think seriously; representing to them with all the force God's grace can give you, the sequel and the horror of this word ETERNAL.

Ask them, as the Prophet did, how they are going to face a whole Eternity passed in continual suffering, always burning, always in torment, not only without ever coming to the end of their punishment, but without alleviation and with no rest? Who among us can dwell with the devouring fire? Who can dwell with everlasting burnings? †

Paint for them the agony, the remorse, the grief—what am I saying?—the *fury*, the *despair* of that heap of unfortunate wretches against whom God has hurled the thunderbolt of His Anathema, and with which you are now threatening *them:* the stress of which, too, they in their turn are likely to feel for ever!

Help them to see themselves as God sees them.

* S. Matt. xxv. 41. † Isa. xxxiii. 14.

Remind them that those same reprobate souls whose condition seems so shocking, and for whom henceforward there is no hope, were not, in this life, any more wicked than they themselves are now. Many indeed were less so. Tell them that they are taking the same line, that they are treading the identical path, and that consequently they are going to the like perdition and must expect to fall into the same abyss, from whose depths no power in heaven or earth can ever pull them out again!

Let them picture to themselves what those lost souls would offer for their ransom, if they still had the chance of doing or of offering anything at all! What they would be ready to undertake on that behalf! What they would gladly undergo, what they would sacrifice for *that!* What evil habits they would renounce, what penances they would perform, to what extremes they would be ready to go! And then tell them that the *one* advantage *they* now possess, is to be able where those reprobate souls are powerless; but that before long, if they do not take good heed—*they*, too, will be powerless to act, where now they can! Implore them, in short, to have pity on their own souls! *Misere animæ tuæ!* *

In speaking to them like this you will the more readily engage their attention.

* Ecclus. xxx. 23.

Just as a sick man, sunk in the depths of a deadly lethargy, begins to give signs of returning consciousness and to open his eyes, when the plunge of the lancet or the sting of the caustic makes itself felt: so this sinner, unless indeed he be fallen into final impenitence, will find it hard to hold out against these soul-awakening reflections. They will strike home. They will terrify. Conscience will trace and retrace them on the tablets of memory; and above all, when things shall take a better turn, Grace will, step by step, or it may be, at a single stroke, cause these seeds of conversion to germinate; so that the man will at last come to himself, will know himself, and the words of the Holy Spirit shall find their fulfilment in his own experience: "The Beginning of Wisdom is the Fear of the Lord: *Initium Sapientiæ timor Domini.*" *

It is by these means that so many worldlings and libertines have been withdrawn from their evil courses, and have entered upon the Pathway of Safety. We have but to consult the pages of history in any age in order to see that this thought of Everlasting Pain has always proved efficient, while the fruits of penitence and sanctification which it has produced are never lacking.

That thought it was which led away to

* Ps. cxi. 10.

mountain summits, or to the gloom of sunless caves, so many sensualists, lovers of the world, lovers still more of themselves and of their flesh. That thought it was which made them cut and cast away for ever the strongest cords of sin and rid themselves of its most entangling snares ; which made them exchange effeminate self-indulgence for the cruelest self-mortification ; which made them observe fast and vigil : their eyes blinded with persistent streams of penitential tears, their bodies red with the weeping of self-inflicted wounds !

That thought it was which filled the cells and cloisters of convent and monastery with the rank and file of the Religious Orders—a host of penitents : men, matrons, maids ; which laid upon them the galling yoke and the dreary monotony of the most spirit-crushing routine ; which drove them to sacrifice themselves like so many slaughter-destined sheep and to spare neither goods, nor wealth, nor pleasure, nor liberty, nor life !

Moreover, it must not be imagined that this thought of Eternal Misery is only good for souls deep sunk in sin, or for those weaklings still covered from head to foot, if one may say so, with the world's dust and filth ; or stained with the ugly splashes of impure thoughts and fancies.

I have already said, and I now repeat, that it is a consideration fit for every ascending degree of perfection's ladder; and if ever I should be able, with any sense of decency, to persuade myself that I had gained the topmost rank among God's Elect—even then, in order to steady myself, to strengthen my hold, and to uplift my heart—never would I omit to shut myself within the soul's quiet chamber of meditation, there to ponder on the Eternal Vengeance of my God!

For I should consider it presumptuous on my part if I were to imagine (as some Christians manage to persuade themselves) that to take up my time with such considerations would be in any way a mark of degeneration from the perfect state.

After all, My Dear Hearers, we are none of us more perfect than David was; and he, according to his own showing, occupied himself with the most profound meditations regarding Eternity, realizing as far as he was able its immeasurable extent and duration: *Cogitavi dies antiquos, et annos æternos in mente habui.**

We are not holier than Saint Jerome, who when he thought upon Eternity, smote his breast unceasingly in order to call down the

* Ps. lxxvii. 5: "I pondered the days of old, the years of (past) ages" (*Parallel Psalter*). The Vulgate follows lxx. (Ps. lxxvi. 5).

compassion of the Lord and to ward off the fearful stroke of His anger.

Ours is no loftier level of piety than that of the host of hermits and anchorites, who from the heights of sublime contemplation—uplifted as it seemed by God to the Third Heaven—used so often to descend to the depths of Hell, there to lose themselves in the trackless abysses of Eternity.

O Arsenius,* blessed for ever! By day, by night, that thought possessed thee! This made thy tears so often flow; this sent thee to the Throne of Grace, labouring with lofty aspirations; this drove thee to persevere in fasting and in self-chastisement! And we, too, along

* Saint Arsenius had filled, and with universal respect, the post of tutor to the Emperor Arcadius, whose minister Eutropius advanced Chrysostom to the see of Constantinople, A.D. 398. He became an hermit. Employing himself in the common occupation of the Egyptian monks, weaving baskets of palm leaves, he changed only once a year the water in which the leaves were moistened. The smell of this fœtid water was a just penalty for the perfumes he had inhaled during his worldly life. Even sleep was a sin; an hour's unbroken slumber was enough for a monk.—DEAN MILMAN'S *History of Christianity*.

The ways of these solitary men were very grotesque no doubt, and may raise a smile in these conventional easy-going days. It was a low level of Christianity perhaps after all. But as the Preacher has above reminded us, the dread of Everlasting Punishment is not the *highest* (but the lowest) motive to work from, therefore we need not be surprised if it fails to produce what we consider to be the highest results. These men were in deadly earnest, and their passions had certainly a hard time of it. Can we say as much?—TR.

with thee, blessed for ever! if we make thy thoughts our own! Given similar causes, similar effects should soon be visible! *

For if this motive be the one most universally applicable, I may add that it is, furthermore, the most stimulating.

What we feel most keenly here in this life and what affects us most readily, is the sensation of pain and the notions we form of it.

Pleasure, the longer it lasts the less it attracts us, even to the point (pleasure though it be) of becoming insipid. It will begin to tire, and actually to fatigue us if we have too much of it.

But Pain, on the contrary (even though it were not so painful as it really is), very far from growing less aggressive as time moves on, becomes progressively more and more acute, till in the long run we feel it to be intolerable.

Hence the shock which the *sight*, even of an accident or of an illness, gives us, as we realize that what has happened to others may happen to ourselves; and that we must be constantly on our guard against such possibilities. When once our imagination has been struck it needs no more to make us undergo all the pain of it in advance. Now, if that be true of some passing malady or misadventure how much more true should it be of an endless calamity!

* End of Part III. of Fourfold Course.

If therefore I desire to arrest the deadly influence of some impure passion which has found its birthplace in my heart, and which has already begun to corrupt it; if I wish to repress my wretched hankerings after the world and certain worldly objects which I cannot too carefully avoid and of which I know the contagion only too well; if the difficulty be to break off some criminal attachment, some bad habit that has gotten the mastery over me and against whose aggressive importunity I want to make a stand; if I have to rouse myself from a lax and lazy frame of mind which makes me neglectful of my duties and which might lead me little by little into the gravest irregularities; if it be my daily life that needs methodizing and the adoption of some definite employment to render it more earnest, more painstaking, and more self-denying, despite the many revolts of a nature always opposed to reform, and that shrinks from the many battles it will cost me—well, what do I do?

I concentrate my whole attention upon the subject of Eternity—this Eternity of pain and misery. Face to face with the horror of such a dreary destiny, I turn all the powers of my mind to the study of Eternity. I look at it from every point of view, taking, so to speak, all its bearings and dimensions.

That I may obtain a still more vivid idea of

this Eternity, and picture it to myself in some manner and degree that shall be more in touch and keeping with the perceptive powers of the human mind: I adopt the illustration employed by the Fathers, and I make, if I may so say, the same calculations.

I imagine the immense multitude of the stars that shine in the firmament. To that innumerable host I add all the drops of water gathered in the bosom of the seas; and if that be not enough I count—or I try to count—all the grains of sand upon their shores. After that I exercise myself, I argue with myself, and I ask myself: When, in that glowing cauldron, heated by the breath of God's displeasure, I shall have suffered just as many ages as there are stars, drops, grains of sand all put together—aye, and a thousand times more!—will Eternity be at an end for me? No, it will not. And why? Because it is still Eternity; and being Eternity, it *never* ends.

One *might* arrive at the exact number of the Stars of Heaven, of the drops which make up the sea, or of the grains of sand that she scatters on her shores; but to number all the days, the years, the ages of Eternity—that is exactly what no man ever will arrive at! Because its days, its years, its centuries, are without number; or rather let us say that, properly speaking, there are *no* days, *no* years, *no* centuries: but

simply infinite duration, just a going on for ever!

There, then, once more is what I set myself to do and where I fix my gaze. For I fancy that I can *see* Eternity and that I am walking in it; but that the end never comes in sight. I see myself surrounded and hemmed in by it on every side; so that whether I mount up, or whether I descend, and no matter in which direction I may turn, *there* is "Eternity." After a thousand attempts to advance along its paths I never make the slightest progress, and it is still "Eternity." I imagine Time's vastest cycles to have been fulfilled; yet still I see the soul of some poor reprobate in the same condition, the same despair, the same frenzy; and substituting myself for him, I fancy that I am always being consumed in that unquenchable fire—always weeping, but with no one who bids me weep no more! Always gnawed by the worm that never dies—always making known my despair in the gnashing of my teeth, and with an exceeding bitter cry that can never touch the heart of God!

This sight of *myself*, this picture of what might one day be my own condition, takes hold of my imagination and fills me with terror. My limbs tremble at the thought of it. I feel all that the Royal Prophet felt when he cried: "Lord, pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear: with

the fear of Thy judgments." *Confige me timore tuo, carnes meas a judiciis enim tuis timui.**

A desirable frame of mind this, amid the most dangerous temptations, and whenever pleasure entices us with her most alluring charms.

Bound with this spell of fear, I care not how much Christianity may demand of me; for nothing can exceed my own resolves or go beyond what I am already prepared to undertake; for I see the necessity of it in the light of Eternity. So that Faith, by means of the view of Eternity and by the Grace that accompanies the same, exercises over me an almost absolute dominion. It binds me down to the strictest obligations of Christian morality. It pledges me to overcome every difficulty which presents itself, and, for that reason, to do myself some wholesome violence. It bridles all my passions. It gives me light. It guides my steps. It places me in perfect subjection to my God.

"But Eternity is incomprehensible! The secret, if you please, of fearing anything which one can form no conception of?"

* Ps. cxix. 120. The LXX. reads Καθήλωσον ἐκ τοῦ φόβου σου τὰς σάρκας μου, ἀπὸ γὰρ τῶν κριμάτων σον ἐφοβηθην. My flesh shuddereth for terror of thee: and I am afraid of thy judgments (*Parallel Psalter*). The original is far stronger, *the hair of my flesh stands* up, as in Job iv. 15 (ELLICOTT).

I reply: "How *not* to fear it!" That this Eternity of pain is incomprehensible,* it is true; but it becomes for that very reason, all the more terrible. If I could *comprehend* it, I should fear it less; because then it must have a limit, since I can take in nothing but what has limits. If I could comprehend it, then it must have a limit in its own duration, as well as in its form of conception in my own mind, and henceforth I should be less afraid of it, because I might hope to *reach* some limit and still, to find myself, even in a state of damnation, not absolutely without resource or hope!

But a misfortune so great as to be inconceivable! That is what chills and paralyzes beyond measure my powers of mind. In short, if it be an ill I can form no conception of, then it must far surpass all the ills I know; and though I were to behold all these latter combined to form the cruel punishment of one and the same person; yet as I should be able to comprend them all, my estimate would be, that, taking them altogether, they must be infinitely inferior to that ill which baffles my every attempt to comprehend, or to conceive it!

* That which cannot be "taken in" or contained by the human mind or by any other *limited* capacity. See the Athanasian Creed, "The Father *Incomprehensible*, etc." *I.e.* that cannot be contained.

Whence I draw this conclusion, which follows as a necessary consequence: that if I had to suffer all the ills I know, I ought to consent without hesitation and even with joy, so that I might flee from an ill which all the others put together cannot equal. With what far greater reason, then, am I bound to submit to some light penance and to make up my mind to those efforts and sacrifices which are demanded of me here; to tie myself down to certain details of self-discipline, very bearable and very profitable, which may render my conduct more in keeping with God's commandments and my life more worthy of a professing Christian.

This should be the argument employed by every godly man—by every man, that is, who still treasures in his heart some germs of true religion. Thus will he reason; and thus will he infallibly conclude; as he seriously reflects upon the Great Hereafter, and right loyally will he obey the first impulses awakened by the contemplation of an Eternity of woe.

But men conclude nothing and do nothing; because no thought is given to the subject; or because all that it arouses is some reflection as superficial as it is casual and vague. Men think enough—indeed they think too much—about all that may happen to them here below. They are only too quick to feel any stroke of bad

luck, disappointment, unpopularity, or a loss which embarrasses their affairs and ruins their fortunes. They are too fond of speculating as to what and where they will be by-and-by, as life goes on. There is no lack of preparation and precaution on that score.

In fact, by dint of dwelling on these things and filling their minds with them, they end by inventing a thousand chimerical possibilities by which they allow themselves to be vainly worried, loading themselves with countless very real cares and anxieties, in order to stave off a host of *imaginary* ills which loom and bulk merely through the lens of nervous apprehension.

Yet they are living all the while in the most profound forgetfulness of their *eternal* destiny: they go on, as far as that is concerned, unmoved and undismayed. Life is ebbing away: Eternity draws near: and, like those victims who are led blindfold to the altar whereon they are to be slain—blindfold *they*, too, approach the precipice!

Now, look here, Brethren! *Are* we Christians? Are we *men?* If Christians, then where is our Faith? If men, where is our sense?

When will you begin to think about this Eternity if you are not already thinking about it now? Will it be during Eternity itself? Oh, yes! Certainly you will think about it then. You will think about it, as you will be bound to think about it then—Eternally!

But will that be the best time for thinking about it? What will those thoughts of yours then be like? They will form part of your eternal torment. Stung by remorse, mad with self-reproach, you will have the torture of thinking when it is too late, that you ought to have thought about it long before!

That is why we put you in mind of it so often. I would give all I possess, if to reform and save mankind, I could but make every country in the world reverberate from hour to hour with this one brief word: ETERNITY!

It would be quite enough to work the most miraculous conversions in every quarter.

Not only do people nowadays not think at all about Eternal Punishment, but—yes! I perceive what a pass the lawlessness of the times has come to already! And what, moreover, blind and blindfolded as we are, it is about to come to! Namely to this: to the pitch of making sport of this wholesome reflection—to the point of treating with contempt any one who seems to be influenced by it and who desires to profit by it; to the length of making him a butt for indecent ridicule and railing at him as a fool that is afraid of Hell-Fire!

For such is the attitude, such the language of hundreds of worldlings.

Ah! My Dear Hearers! You may rail to

your heart's content; but my fear of Hell-Fire will not grow any the less on that account! I do fear it. And oh! that I might have the happiness of making you partakers of my fear! I fear it *supremely*. I fear it *constantly*; and I pray heaven that I may fear it *effectually*!

I fear it Supremely, because fear should be proportioned to its object; and since this Hell I fear is the foremost of all evils, I should not be fearing it adequately if I did not fear it in the highest degree.

I fear it Constantly; and that I may never lose this fear, I will revive it unceasingly by means of Meditation, and by the frequent contemplation of the judgments of God. So long as I live in this world, no matter what virtues I may have practised, I shall never know for certain whether in God's sight I am worthy of being beloved or whether I merit the Eternal Retribution of His wrath. Even should I feel at ease as to the Past, and as to the Present, yet in the midst of so many snares lying hid on every side, and after the astounding falls of which more than once we have all been witnesses, I can never answer for the Future; so that in this double uncertainty my surest safeguard is watchfulness and fear.

And lastly, one of the greatest boons I can procure from Heaven is that my fear may prove Effectual. For there is a fear of Hell which is

worthless and sterile; just as there may be a longing for Heaven which bears no fruit. We fear and we long, or we fancy we do; but we are anxious at the same time that neither the fear nor the longing should cost us anything: a Fear futile and worthy of anathema! If I *fear* I am bound to *act.* I must correct my faults. I must go forward. I must become perfect. I should leave nothing undone which may guarantee my safety from the calamity I fear to meet.

These are my sentiments; and may they never be absent from my mind! Should the scoffer treat them as weak and as the coward-fear of superstition, I shall still prefer my weakness to his show of strength. He will laugh at my simplicity, and I shall pity his folly in not fearing what has been feared by so many men a thousand times wiser and better-advised than he. I shall pity his lack of penetration in taking so little part in what concerns himself so closely; interesting himself so feebly in what interests everybody and above all! together with his rashness and audacity, in exposing himself with so light a heart and with such cool unconcern to the peril of Eternal Reprobation, and his unfaltering readiness to take the whole risk! Should he turn a deaf ear to the charitable advice I willingly offer him in this matter; if in spite of my very strongest remonstrances he

entrenches himself in his obstinacy, then—following the example of the Angels who withdrew from Sodom—I shall leave him to his own reprobate mind and look to myself.

Uplifting my hands to God, my prayer shall be that of the Prophet: *Ne perdas cum impiis, Deus, animam meam!** "Let not my soul, O Lord, Let not my soul perish with the ungodly!" Of Thy Great Mercy save me! Help me that I may work out my soul's salvation! That Heir of Immortality! My Darling! My beloved self! If lost, then *lost for ever!* There is, O God, no middle path for me!

Dear Hearers, let us save ourselves from such dread loss! Every one for himself in this matter! There is no business so personal and so particular as this. Our success depends upon God and upon Ourselves.

God for His part will not fail *us*. Let us not fail *Him;* nor be found wanting when He opens to us the treasures and the resources of His Grace.

Let us prepare ourselves by strict observance of His laws, to enter upon OUR GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF EVERLASTING BLISS; to which God of His infinite Mercy bring us, through Jesus Christ! *Amen.*

* Ps. xxvi. 9.

KINDRED THOUGHTS ON THE SAME SUBJECT

WE proceed to consider permanent separation from God under the form of "eternal sin." It is our Lord's own phrase, and probably enables us best to grapple with the subject.

Eternal sin is credible from what we know of character.

1. Character is the whole tendency which leads us to think, will, and act in a particular way; it is the fixed and final set of the moral being.*

Thus character tends not only to be stereotyped, but to become, in a large degree, fatal and mechanical. Some young people, no doubt, seem to be able to take short courses of sin, not only with impunity, but even gracefully. Certain sins of the *jeunesse dorée* are scarcely looked upon even by many mothers with much regret. Those dashing lads are so splendidly unregenerate! They have dipped into a "creamed and mantling pool," but it has only been momentary. . . .

* See *Personality Human and Divine.* Illingworth.

But, at last, a time comes when the character is fixed, and the result final as far as this life is concerned.

2. Now let us turn to the bearing of this upon the Hereafter. If the Hereafter be the continuance of the present, we have only to push this law of character over the boundary-line of death: to translate the fact of the moral nature which we observe into its spiritual equivalent. Will it not run exactly thus, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still"?

But it will be said that this is giving to finite and passing sins an infinite effect.

Let us grant that the same sins, or even courses of sin, *are* passing and finite. Others, it would seem, are *not* . . . One phrase (2 Peter ii. 14), "having eyes *full of an adulteress*, and that cannot cease from sin," has burned itself into my memory, and I cannot get rid of it. "Eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin," fixed in an expression which they cannot lose, with an image which will never fade out of them!

What, then, if the sinner carries with him out into the new land, not merely the passing sin which he did, but the eternal sin which he will do inevitably, imperishably, inwardly? The outward eye, that exquisite apparatus made of "a little jelly and a little leather," may glaze

and become dust; but the forbidden image may have been carried on to that "inward eye which is the bliss"—or the hell—"of solitude."

* * * * *

The most gifted woman's hand that ever held the pencil of romance wrote some of the saddest sentences ever traced upon the earth. Her biographer confesses that her life was one of deepest gloom; that "she did not conceal that she esteemed it a wrong and a misery that she had ever been born." Why such sustained, permanent, unassuaged misery, mental and spiritual, if there is no such thing as guilt in the mental and spiritual order; if intellectual sin is only bad logic; if he who rejects God's revelation is no more guilty than the stupid or idle undergraduate who fails to satisfy his examiners in "Barbara, Celarent," and the mysteries of deductive logic? It is of sin in the world of *thought* that Christ says, "Guilty of Eternal sin." This is the true reading of St. Mark iii. 29 (*Primary Convictions*, ARCHBISHOP ALEXANDER).

As the Preacher suggests (p. 135), though he does not plainly state the thought: sin caused (so to speak) the *Death of God!* Can He be blamed for eternally punishing so fearful a mischief, which is incompatible with His own Existence?

The laws of God are those of our Spiritual health. He is our Physician, not our Schoolmaster. The boy may disobey the rules of the Schoolmaster, but that disobedience will never *of itself* give him "lines" or bring his back in contact with the rod. But if the same boy disobeys the Doctor's orders he will endanger his health, and if he persists he may wreck his life for good. So with God's laws. Disobedience to them works its own retribution. If persevered in, the spiritual life grows weak and unhealthy, and may end in final hopeless wreck and irremediable moral ruin.

"I am not so cruel as your God is," said a man in the hearing of the writer. "I would not so much as hold my child's little finger in the flame of a candle for five minutes; while He burns *His* children for ever in hell."

Answer: "Your children and God's are too much alike in this: they are both fond of *playing* with fire; and any child-burning that is done either in your nursery or in hell is the result of the child's bad habit of *playing* with fire."

"Characters, not acts, are punished. Their penalty is to be what they are." See *Faith of the Gospel* (Ed. 1894, pp. 408 to end).

THE HEREAFTER.

I.—The Deists on Eternal Punishment.

"Finite offence, infinite punishment!
No other finite works out infinite.
And what is sin? Full often to the light
Of life's main sea a shadow lent
From a thin cloud—a momentary bent
Of wills not adamant in their own despite,
Hastily touch'd; on shields of argent white,
A blur avenged by deep self-discontent.
Cruel the creeds that disproportionate
To transitory sin eternal fire;
Condemn'd by love's great logic that forgives,
By all the helplessness of human lives,
By all the Fatherhood our heart's desire,
By all Christ's sweet anathemas of hate."

II.—Eternal Sin.

"'A sin that passes!' Lo, one sad and high,
Bearing a taper stately like a queen,
Talks in her sleep—'Will these hands ne'er be clean?
What is done cannot be undone.' She walks by
As she must walk thro' her eternity,
Bearing within her that which she hath been.
'The sin that I have sinn'd is but one scene,
Life is manifold drama,' so men cry.
Alas! the shadow follows thee too well.
The interlude outgrows its single part,
And every other voice is stricken dumb.
That which thou carriest to the silent dell,
Is the eternal sin thou hast become.
The everlasting tragedy thou art!"

From *The Spectator*.

Cain's Punishment.

Cain said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." We sometimes say that punishment should be proportioned to sin. There is a sense in which that is most true and just. It is most true and just with regard to all punishment that comes from the outside. It is a law which must be obeyed by the parent, the magistrate, and every wronged or offended man. But this is by no means the limit of the question. *The punishment which a man inflicts upon himself* is infinitely severer than any punishment that can be inflicted upon him. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" You remember how you ill-treated that poor child now dead; you saw the anguish of his soul, and he besought you and you would not hear; and now a great distress is come upon you, and your bread is very bitter. Who is punishing you? Not the magistrate. Who then? *You are punishing yourself.* You cannot forgive yourself. The child touches you at every corner, speaks to you in every dream, moans in every cold wind, and lays its thin pale hand upon you in the hour of riot and excitement. You see that ill-used child everywhere; a shadow on the fair horizon, a background to the face of every other child, a ghostly contrast to everything lovely and fair. Time cannot quench the fire. Events cannot throw into the dim distance this tragic fact. It surrounds you,

mocks you, defies you, and under its pressure you know the meaning of the words, which no grammarian could understand, "The wicked shall go away into EVERLASTING punishment."

All this will come the more vividly before us if we remember that a man who has done wrong has not only to *be* forgiven, he has to forgive himself. That is the insuperable difficulty. . . .

I have said that even God's forgiveness, strictly in itself, does not meet the case of a man being unable to forgive himself. It is so, *philosophically*, but, thank God, not *evangelically*. God's forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is not mere forgiveness, however abundant and emphatic. It is not merely a royal or even paternal edict. It is an act incomplete in itself; it is mere introductory or preparatory, as the uprooting of weeds is preliminary to a better use of the soil. It is an *essential* act, for in the absence of pardon the soul is absolutely without the life that can lay hold of any of the higher blessings or gifts of God. To what, then, is forgiveness preparatory? To adoption, to communion with God, to absorption into the Divine nature, to the witness of the Holy Ghost (*The People's Bible*, vol. i.).

IV
EVERLASTING HAPPINESS

By THE TRANSLATOR

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS

PROLOGUE

THE RASHNESS OF INEXPERIENCE

Ego veni ut vitam habeant et abundantius habeant.

I am come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.—S. John x. 10.

UNFORTUNATELY, but only too naturally, we seem to know much more about Hell than we do about Heaven.

We have probably suffered in mind, body, or estate ourselves; or if we have not, then a glance at the prodigious size and alarming number of our Lunatic Asylums, our Hospitals, and our Workhouses is sufficient to show what ingredients for an incipient hell lurk in our midst, so far as mere suffering is concerned.

Whereas of Happiness what have we tasted? What do we know? What we have found out is that there is none unmixed, and none that lasts. In infancy it arrives too soon to be fully enjoyed. In old age we have lost our capacity.

So it comes to pass that it is always easier for us to picture the tortures of Hell than the life and occupation of Heaven.

We cannot be quite sure either that a modified Hell would not be more to our taste than the conventional Heaven of perpetual Church Services and Hymn-singing. Many of us do not like that sort of thing now, and we fear we should not like it then. We should get dull and bored over it. The other place would be more lively.

Deep down in our fallen nature there is a longing to have a fling without being called upon to pay the penalty. It is more the *Punishment* of crime than the *Hell* of crime that we dread. Crime is *not* a Hell to us. There are moments when—awful to reflect—it is our Heaven. That is what is amiss with us.

The newly adopted street-arab must change his tastes and habits before the cultured, disciplined, life of his adoptive father's house will be anything of a Heaven to him. Association will do much, experience will do more, and the second-nature of new-formed habit will accomplish the rest.

How, then, can we, gutter-bred souls, with our limited experience of life and pleasure, expect to enjoy cleanliness, study, intellectual work, or art? How, that is, can we earth-born and earth-limited beings expect to enjoy pleasures

so far above us, and which need a new organism, a "new creation" in fact, for their apprehension and expression?

The Promised Land looks so far off. We grow weary of the way.

Egypt with its despotism and our daily rations was better after all than this life of citizenship with its responsibilities, its demands upon the individual for the benefit of the body corporate, its rates and taxes, and restraints. Well, pleasure and pain are relative terms. What is one man's pleasure is another man's pain. What is pleasure when we are well is pain when we are ill. When we are ill, "Give us the Hell of sloth and darkness and inactivity. I am too weak to move. To walk is purgatory." When we are well, we cannot be still: "Thank God there's a Switzerland with Alps to climb and a bracing sense of danger to be encountered!"

A great deal of what we call pain now would be pleasure if we had more abundant life. We should then call it *exercise.* We are but half alive, and that is the truth; yet we would limit and define these two elastic terms by our imperfect conditions and our brief and narrow experience! Verily, we have the audacity of our ignorance!

To the great soul of John Wesley the whole world was one Parish! Big certainly as a

Parish, but somewhat restricted as a universe! We are dying of terrestrial parochialism. We need always to carry a telescope at one eye and a microscope at the other to keep us large and sane. We are capable of believing any tale of horror and of defective animation. With our lips we pronounce our *Credo* of life, but in our heart of hearts the only thing we are quite sure about is Death and Darkness, and Undertakerdom in general. We are like people whose experience has been limited to life in hospitals and infirmaries, who are incapable of comprehending hoar old age, healthy life, or a state of things where whole limbs, unbruised bodies, and jubilant athleticism are the order of the day.

Our blind generalizations are amazing. Because we cannot see the sun, therefore no one else can, and he does not shine! Why, even this Big Parish of John Wesley's might teach us better things than these, might keep us, that is, out of these ruts and grooves. Even within its narrow round there are sufficient diversities, anomalies, and antipodal marvels, to preserve within us that indispensable organ of scientific progress, the CHILD'S MIND: so ungroovy, so unprejudiced, so akin to life and sunshine, so horrified at the first news of death, so alien from all that is dark and doleful, so ready to accept without astonishment Gath

and all its Goliaths, Gulliver and all his Travels, Fairies, Angels, and what *we* call miracles, simply because we have been unscientific enough to take what is local, parochial and terrestrial as universal; uppish enough besides to hold that since this planet happens to be our planet that therefore all other planets are or ought to be exactly similar; and that anything extra, ultra, or super-terrestrial is also super-natural and super-universal! If the large heart of John Wesley needed the Whole World for its Parish, the still larger mind of the Child demands the Eternal and Immortal for its Home. Being sane, it seeks a Home, and has no fancy for dwelling among Tombs! Of Death it knows nothing. It believes in Father, Mother, Love, and Everlasting life! Any limitation or impoverishment of either Life or Light is an offence unto it. *Our* Miracle is Life! Its miracle is *Death.* Twenty, Thirty, or Forty years' residence in Our Earthly Parish will alas! crib, cabin, and confine its universal life, and by fifty it will be quite ready for the most part solemnly to accept Rules for Exceptions and Exceptions for Rules: to take Death for granted and to question any phenomena that make for more abundant life. Yes! By that time this parochial existence will have rounded that mind's *experience.* It will swear by what eye can see or has seen, by what ear can hear, and by

what heart can conceive; forgetting that these instruments admit to its ken not all that there is to be seen, to be heard, or to be conceived even betwixt heaven and earth, but just so much of it all as they—tiny teaspoons that they are!—can take up or take in of the great Ocean of sights, of sounds, and of conceptions which surrounds us, but of which we can absorb so little. "*How small a whisper do we hear of Him!*"* said Job. Which Little, however, we in our arrogant nescience declare to be All!

Misery we know! Gloom we know! Death we are accustomed to; darkness we tolerate for various economic reasons! But cheerfulness, brightness, life, and joy—these we find a trifle overwhelming to ourselves and astonishing in anybody else. "Fancy a man of your age saying he is happy!" It was the remark of a woman of the world to a man of fifty-five! Fifty-five years of this world are enough then to extinguish our happiness, which is evidently a very long way from being Everlasting. No one nowadays believes in anything eternal except perhaps eternal boredom. Everlasting Punishment has long been an exploded article of belief, though surely there is Hell enough in this life to foster our belief in its possibility beyond; but the subject has been dealt with in the preceding sermon, so we will leave it.

* Job. xxvi. 14.

And if the doctrine of Everlasting Pain has been thrown overboard; it is much to be doubted whether a belief in Everlasting Happiness has ever held much place at all among our religious cargo; for this world offers us nothing that lasts, much less anything that is everlasting.*

But that is no reason why things should not last longer elsewhere and under other conditions.

Now, what are the *elements* of Happiness, lasting or everlasting?

May we not sum them up under the familiar heads of WEALTH, PEACE, and GODLINESS? Which shall form the Threefold Division of this Discourse.

* See "The Saint's Reward," vol. iii. of the small edition of the Series.

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS:

PART I

WEALTH

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS

PART I

WEALTH

Suadeo tibi emere a me aurum ignitum probatum ut locuples fias.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.—Rev. iii. 18.

I AM sure that I shall have the ready assent of the worldlings to my first proposition, namely, that wealth is indispensable to Happiness.

How can a fellow be happy without a Penny in his Pocket? That is to say, how can he be happy without his Club, his yacht, his billiard table and his Continental visits undertaken to escape our English Springs, as well as the restraints of English Society? *

Three hundred thousand pounds a week must be poured into Hotels, Theatres, and Gambling Dens on the sunny Southern shore

* Not a bit of harm in any or all of these things, so long as they do not become mere *distractions*, or absorb the whole life.

before Society can be happy. Not that it is happy then! Without wealth no man can see the world.

But in the readiness of this worldling's assent we have the reason for his failure to find lasting happiness, not to speak of everlasting. As the flannel shrinks in the washing so do ample words shrink in man's wear and usage. Look at Charity for instance! From being the warmest, most large-hearted of the virtues it has shrunk to the cold glitter of the moon, and is used as a cloak for leanness. Ask tradesmen the quality of Charity-tea or Charity-blankets! Ask yourself why you gave "that Penny" in *Charity!* Or what ideas of liberality or of comfort the mind attaches to the Charity Sermon or the Charity School!

The word Wealth has suffered in the same way. Its original and legitimate meaning is Well-being: Health and Wealth being kindred terms. But since to the average man—or must we limit the expression and say to the average *Englishman*—well-being means the possession of a large amount of gold coin, it has shrunk to that! Wealth has shrunk to mean riches: Life to the abundance of things a man possesses!

For should we be wrong in supposing that nine persons out of ten do (as the writer did when his young ears first heard the words) understand that when they pray God that the

English people may be kept in Wealth, Peace, and Godliness, they are praying Him to see to it as the foremost of all His obligations, that John Bull's pockets should be kept well lined? We do greatly fear it. May God discipline us to better things! John Bull is a right good fellow. He only needs teaching. Touch his heart and no one will sooner empty his pockets. Even as these words are being penned * those capacious pockets are being turned almost inside out at the bidding of that still more capacious heart. This is gold tried in the fire. It is Gold for God that maketh man rich in the spending of it. This process, moreover, is very much to the present point. He finds that what his pocket lacks his heart and his whole life gain. He has lavished "the yellow, the hard, and the cold" with the economic unthrift of genuine Charity. The dead weight in his purse and pocket has been exchanged for lightness of heart and for the tearful gratitude of millions. The tears are in his own eyes as he reads of their thanks to benefactors distant and unknown. A splendid investment! What? have you only just found that out! Have you forgotten that the Bible—not out of date yet, but *fin de* a good many *siècles* yet unborn—don't you know, that the

* During the Transvaal War and the Indian Famine, A.D. 1900, when England seemed really to be tasting the luxury of giving.

Bible has been telling you these thousand years and more that Godliness is great gain, and that it is more blessed to give than to receive! And so it is! The prayers and the tears of grateful millions! What *Wealth!* Not personal or private but wider—*Common* wealth! Empire! Union of hearts in Brotherly love. But not so much coin to count. You can't have both, you know—and yet! Yes I believe you can and will have *Both!* Give and it shall be given unto you! In return for the gold that perisheth, in exchange for the riches that are so apt to take to themselves wings, you have—what am I going to say? Where have we got to? Why, HAPPINESS! Joy that—unlike your money—no man can take from you!

If wealth means only money, then many a man has lived to say I am wealthier without it than with it! But let us understand for ever and a day that Wealth means all the goodly meaning you can possibly put into the words WELL-BEING. It means more than itself even; for it takes in Peace and Godliness as well; seeing that without them there can be no wealth, no health, no well-being.

Good! We are progressing. If wealth, that is to say, general Well-being, includes Health, pray what do we know about that?

We meet, especially at our invalid resorts, with a large number of people who declare

themselves to be "in the enjoyment of *bad* health." But it is almost a breach of good manners to admit that you are anything more animate than "*Pretty* well." Certain aggressive forms of athleticism indeed permit their votaries to boast of "fitness;" but is that synonymous with Health—even physical health? Many are more robust in their exercise than in their constitution; and medical men have much to say about physically fluttered hearts. But that may be professional prejudice Let it pass. Fit to the full they shall be.

But Man is such a very complex and complicated piece of machinery, organism, or organ. Yes, he is not unlike the instrument of music which we know by that name; especially the larger and grander sorts. First of all, as it is with them, so with him; he is very difficult to keep in tune. The slightest change of weather or of temperature affects them and him alike. Both require expert treatment to keep them in perfect order. If the "swell" is left shut in the musical instrument, the inequality of temperature within and without the box puts the organ out of tune. An organ is made up of many organs; the Choir, the Swell, and the Pedal, not to mention any more. Each of these must be in tune with itself, and not only so, but must be in tune with all the others—otherwise!

Now look at Man! with his threefold nature

of Body, Soul, Spirit: his nervous system, his digestive apparatus, and his muscular organism; not to speak of that more immediately connected with his affections and his passions! Consider his bones, his blood, his brains, his eyes, his teeth, and his hair: all and each built up of living cells.

How very seldom do we meet with any human being who can say that any one of these systems or organs is in tune itself, or if so, is in tune with the others; and the disorder of one disorders all the rest.

A machine is nothing in comparison with man. In him every tissue, every fragment of material is alive, and hosts of unconscious labourers are tussling and tugging, pushing and shoving along the corridors of the blood-vessels to pass out through that wonderful system of drains—the pores of the skin—every atom of dead and dying material. Man is a world in himself. He is *legion*, and so long as he can be legion and yet maintain his personal supremacy all is well; but if this legion-life dethrone the personal, then he is done for. Such a catastrophe, moreover, is ever imminent, always possible. For man to live throughout his whole self and to fill his whole being is health and wealth. But his life is not sufficiently abundant, there is shrinkage of positive, aggressive existence, and therefore there is room for foreign encroachment or invasion.

If we could but see what ant-hill stir of myriad life we unify with that personal pronoun so little likely ever to become second or third, which is so often on our lips, we should be amazed and alarmed! This apparent and so stressfully maintained unity of ours is that of the whirling sandstorm or the rolling wave, ever changing its material, ever on the brink of collapse, but still tottering on a little further under the burden of its individual identity.

As a matter of fact, man must be above, beyond and, perhaps, *beside* himself before he can be wholly and fully Himself.

Our earthly existence is not long enough to allow of our perfecting the development of our threefold nature. It is impossible for any one man at any one moment to be perfect (*i.e.* fully developed and fully active) in body, in soul, and in spirit, and perfectly to sum up in his personality the full scope of this triune life.

In the case of the Athlete the body is developed at the expense of soul and spirit. In that of the student and philosopher the intelligence department of the soul is worked to the neglect of the Body and the Spirit. In that of the so-called "Saint" the spiritual development is very apt to strain the physical organism to breaking-point. Yet it is to the latter, that is to the spiritual nature, that we

must look for the control of the whole man and the making of him healthy and happy.

The healthy man is the happy man. And healthiness is but another word for holiness. Yet, for the present the Spiritual nature is the weakest of the three and least able to assert itself amid the aggressions of what is technically called "the flesh," which does not mean the body only, but all that can and does array itself against the Spirit, whether it be the body or the soul or both: that is to say, the intelligence, the affections, the passions and the will: a dangerous crew, and always ready for mutiny!

For man to be happy he must be whole. He must be healthy, wealthy and wise; whereas though he boasts sometimes of his wealth and his health, yet he has sore need to buy him wholesome food and medicine and of money of the country where the things he needs are sold. What he chiefly purchases, if left to himself, and at the highest price, is personal experience —and it is for the most part bitter, and generally very dear.

But apart from the experience which is personal, there is the great sum-total of scientific observation and discovery always working itself up-to-date and never getting there; for as has been so well said: * "*In Science the first proposition is true only so far as it agrees with the last.*

* *Primary Convictions*, Archbishop Alexander.

In Faith the last is true only so far as it coheres with the first. Science commits suicide when she accepts a fixed Creed; Faith when she rejects one." Even Science has taught us that seeing is not believing and that indeed things are far from being what they seem. Science has taught us; and every amateur photographer is struck with the miraculous fact, that instead of our looking at things, things are looking at us; that in hearing as in seeing, the so-called "hearer" or "seer" is patient not agent, a receiver not a projector.* But we particularly thank Science for having taught us that it is no more wonderful (Why should it be, O Man of the parochial mind?) to *see* through a wall than it is to *hear* through it. The one is no more marvellous than the other. It is merely a matter of the strength and velocity of your vibrations and the sensitiveness of your receivers. Some say we live too fast. The truth is we do not live half fast enough.

Would that science could discover some means for augmenting the nervous, digestive, and intellectual forces of man; and of balancing them better with his spiritual capacity!† But the simile of the Organ returns. Man is an instrument which cannot be kept in tune, even

* We are all Marconis without knowing it!

† The discovery of the electrical nature of the nervous system tends in this direction.

with all the tuning and tinkering he gets. Really it would seem that he were exotic even in this his own native and narrow land. How difficult to find either climate or weather to suit him! He alternates between sweats and chills. For, how few and far between are the moments of his existence in which he is quite "up to the mark," really and fully alive in every corner of his being, bodily, mental, spiritual! Those three "organs" are always more or less out of tune individually, or collectively, or both. He has been fitted, it is true, with a most lovely *Vox Humana* stop and also with a *Voix Céleste;* yet how often is the sound they emit more like the cry or croak of some obscene bird, than of anything celestial or even human?

"I am not well!" That is his chief complaint. And so he calls in the bodily physician with his drugs, which scour the bowels but leave the heart untouched and the character unchanged, while the liver generally gets the credit of the mischief. Till at the last he cries in bitter disappointment with Macbeth: "Canst thou not minister to a *mind* diseased?" or down upon his knees in few and homely words he utters the sad truth of his condition: "I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and therefore I found time to do those things which I ought not to have done, and so there is no *health in* me!"

He is right. It is not the weather, nor the

climate, nor even the Government of the hour, but Himself! "Myself am—not Heaven!" And so he is not there: for when there was a great deal of talk about the Heavenly Kingdom and people were looking North, South, East, and West for its appearance eager to catch the first wave of its banner or to hear the first beat of its drum; the startling announcement was made: "The Kingdom of God or of Heaven is *within* you." There or nowhere. Now or Never!

So instead of man's going to Heaven, as the vulgar phrase runs, Heaven must come to him. The order of the Four Last things should be this: *First*, Hell or Heaven; and *then* Death; and after that *more* and *more* of Hell or *more* and *more* of Heaven, as the case may be.

Yes, man is sadly out of sorts; *how* seriously so may be judged from the constant occupation and activity of Physician, Lawyer, and Priest. But here is a *scientific* statement of the cause of this derangement which curiously agrees with the *theological* view of the matter; and yet, why *curiously?* For if Science be (as we are told it is) Common Sense Organized, then Religion is Common Sense Sanctified. Science is the sum-total of human observation and experience; generalized and brought down to date. Religion is but one fact among many which has to be studied and classified by

Science. Science in short is Knowledge, while Religion is Wisdom. Now there can be no antagonism between Knowledge and Wisdom. On the contrary. They should never be separated; for Knowledge, be there little or much, without Wisdom, is a very dangerous thing.

The statement above referred to is as follows:

"The motive of the drama of human life is the necessity, laid upon every man who comes into the world, of discovering the mean between *self-assertion* and *self-restraint* suited to his character and his circumstances. And the eternally tragic aspect of the drama lies in this: that the problem set before us is one the elements of which can be but imperfectly known, and of which even an approximately right solution rarely presents itself, until that stern critic, aged experience, has been furnished with ample justification for vaunting his sarcastic humour upon the irreparable blunders we have already made." *

Well, live and learn! as they say. But man is too apt to live without learning. His life, so the same teacher bids us know, is a struggle between the "cosmic" and the "ethic"—between the Flesh and the Spirit, as Saint Paul would say, and this struggle which should

* *Evolution and Ethics*, Professor Huxley.

be for man's wealth, becomes too often an occasion of falling. Thus those two really scientific men, Saint Paul and Professor Huxley, arrive at precisely the same conclusion.

This struggle disturbs man's wealth. It interferes with his Well-being. He is at odds with himself. Hyde is for ever undoing Jekyll. Well might the *Times* Reviewer of that well-known romantic allegory * declare that it must be either the work of Twenty Years or the inspiration of Twenty Minutes. Never has uninspired pen produced a more grimly accurate picture of man's life-and-death-struggle with himself than is to be found in those few pregnant pages.

Now, the Bible from its first chapter shows that man is suffering from disease, that he is not himself, but two selves: divided: the soul of Jekyll striving only to do well, the hands of Hyde working all uncleanness.

"O wretched man that I am," cried one of the best of us, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Yes! in order to be made Happy man must be made Whole.

Made whole! Not if the enemy can help it! "*Divide et impera!*" cry both Cæsar Divus and Cæsar Diabolus.

* *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Robert Louis Stevenson.

But a greater than Cæsar—who while Augustus was making himself God, "came down from Heaven and was made Man"—He knows our need of Peace, and indeed He has no other Benediction for us.

Peace, therefore, we will now consider as the second condition of Man's Happiness and as the gift of Him who is both able and willing to make us WHOLE.

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS:

PART II

PEACE

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS

PART II

PEACE

Omne gaudium existemate, fratres mei, cum in tentationes varias incideritis.

My Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.—S. James i. 2.

WHAT is Peace? Let us define. There are various kinds and degrees of Peace; so before launching out into the deep of any discussion or meditation upon the subject, we will first acquire a clear notion of what we are talking about. Peace to be beneficial or lasting must be positive and not merely negative. Not to be at war is not necessarily to be at peace. That negatively quiet condition of things may be the calm before the storm. It may mean the quiet corruption of the corpse of which the wind carries the tidings to keen-scented vultures,* whose dark wings will soon blot the tranquil blue.

* The well-known saying is accepted in its popular sense.

Or it may be the iron peace of the strong man armed, keeping his house; but unless and until he be the *strongest* man, there is always frontier-danger from the ever imminent stronger-than-he! Or, again, your so-called peace may be but a mere truce of weariness: both sides worn out with strife and so pausing to bury their slain, remount their guns and repair their strongholds.

Or once more it may be a peace maintained at any price for the sake of commercial interests: a mean and debasing peace: the peace of the Mercantile School; who may not perceive that force of some sort is always necessary in this naughty world, and that in bolting their warehouse doors at night and placing themselves under the protection of policemen, they have already declared war private, personal, and selfish, against any person or persons who may be moved to covet or desire other men's (that is to say *their*) goods; and that in so doing they acknowledge the need and duty of self-defence for the individual; which, however, involves that of the nation; and with this difference, that in the case of the nation, instead of a system of bolts and bars backed by police, juries, and lock-ups; there must be a diplomatic code well backed up by big guns and bayonets, and that of no leaden sort either, such as commerce is sometimes anxious to supply!

No! All those are so many specimens of that vulture-peace which tempts and beckons outrage. So the Ancients are right as usual when they say: "*Si vis pacem, para bellum.*" If you want peace make you ready for war. There is no other way with human nature as it is: be it a question of peace within or of peace without.

"If," said Our Lord to Pilate, "my kingdom were of this world, then would *my* officers have fought." Of course. Much is said about the horrors of war. As much or even more might be urged against the horrors of peace; and did it not savour of heresy within these seas, we might declare that trade is more demoralizing than war; that it is, in fact, "war grown miserly!"

Considering the outer world on the threshold of this Twentieth Century of Grace—if also of disgrace—we may say that the world is working its way *through war* to universal peace. The past has left us too many old scores to be wiped out, that it should be otherwise. For many nations: ourselves, perhaps, among the number: it is fast becoming a question of To-be or Not-to-be. Kingdoms that are of this world must have their servants fight if they would not be delivered to the Jews of the moment.

There are survivals of the Middle Ages, civil and religious, which nothing but a general

upheaval will out-root: good, very good they were as Middle Ages; but to-day, henceforth and for ever, out of date, discredited and doomed. The new bottles are fast a-making for the storage of the strong new wine of the Years of Grace coming and yet to come!

Bottles are sadly wanted for the new wine of a dawning and developing Africa, of an old Europe in travail, of an effervescent Asia, and an ever-growing America. The old bottles are badly worn and thin. Attempts are being made to pour the new wine into them, but the failure of the experiment is becoming dangerously clear; and it will be the bursting up of those old skins! Let Statesman and Ecclesiastic, Priest and Prophet take what pains they may—that rebottling will be a parlous process. There will be an abundance of fizz and froth, of leakage and of waste; but experience teaches us hope, and bids us look forward to an era of peace well-founded, the new wine having been got at last into the new bottles. French Revolutions and all such social and political upheavals are processes of rebottling the new wine of the Kingdom of God. It must be done. Circumstances may combine to delay and postpone it, but the trouble will come at last; unless the Powers that be, acting the part of Seers, become fellow-workers with God, not daring to cork down or in any way suppress the

Heaven-stirred ferment, but rather showing themselves alert in providing new and larger vessels for the sparkling foaming wine of a wider, ampler, more abounding life. Revolution is suppressed Evolution.

Continuing our review of things outward and national, our attention is particularly arrested by two thickly encrusted much becobwebbed old Bottles: namely the Church and the State of the Middle Ages, which still endeavour to confine the new fermented ideals and aspirations of that dangerously explosive mixture we call Man.

The Mediæval Papacy with its *spiritual* Cæsarism added on to the temporal power of old Rome, a double-sceptre which its ancient palsied grasp will never relinquish save at the bidding of accomplished destiny: that old bottle once as necessary and useful as it is now hindering and harmful, will have to burst if it persists in its endeavour to contain the new wine of man's ever-widening growth.

The other old Bottle is what still lingers of the Feudal System—in a word and to sum up all, the miserably short pint of selfishness, wherever it is to be found! Not that the Feudal System was particularly selfish; but where it *lingers* now it may be hindering.

These are Old Bottles which must be—well, we will not say burst; for the process (so rarely

adopted by man, but which would have saved him so many jolts and accidents), the process willed by God is not destruction, but fulfil ment, which implies transformation,* and perhaps transfiguration!

Man himself is not to be destroyed, but to be transformed together with his surroundings. The swaddling clothes of his infancy no longer fit him. He has heaps of toys, but they are discarded in his craving and search for realities.

What he seeks is something that lasts. As time goes on he wants to *settle*. The story books found him out long ago; for is not this their familiar and conventional ending: "And they lived happy ever afterwards."

Yes, to live happy ever afterwards! The words have a music of their own. Where can we sit us down to rest? Where can we sing, not as exiles by the waters of Babylon, but in some lasting Zion the Lord's song: "Home! Home! Sweet Home!"?

Man seeks to be happy, not for a month or a moment, but ever afterwards and ever*more!*

But for that, whether it be for months or for moments, he must be well: healthy in body, sound in mind, and strong in spirit. Conditions

* "What waits the earth! Deliverance?
Ah, no! Transfiguration!"
A. DE VERE.

difficult if not impossible of fulfilment at present: because of the Old Bottle of the first Adam's nature which cannot contain the new wine of everlasting happiness.*

Not only must he have wealth in its widest possible sense, but he must have Peace, and find a Peace-maker.

There is but one, and He is Jesus, who is called the Christ; and even He can only make us taste of happiness akin in source, and depending upon an environment which shall be similar to His own.

The Peace He makes, the Peace He gives, is the fruit of a war successfully and wisely waged: the outcome of His Death and Resurrection; one which can resolve all our discords: "the discord between Us and God; the discord between Us and Ourselves; the discord between Us and our Brethren."

Of these three, the last has already been treated of in a former volume of this Series by a master hand.† We are now concerned with the First and Second: Peace with God and Peace with Ourselves.

The divine discontent which distinguishes Man from the other animals is a fact which Science

* "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. xv. 50).

† See "Peace, Religion and Morals," vol. iii. of the Pocket Edition.

must take note of and account for, while Religion affords its explanation and satisfies its hunger.

It is certainly true that if he has his portion only in this life man is of all the animals the most miserable. The other animals—in *this* respect our inferiors—though with no hope beyond its Confines, are withal content. They are at peace with God and with themselves. Neither Conscience nor any other Accuser can make cowards of them. They can look their God in the face as creatures who have never broken any of His commandments, but who have entirely fulfilled the object of their being. And that is why they are happy. Moreover, Animal Society other than that of man himself, has not been hampered with interference and restriction and difficulties together with temptations, which in man's case make it next to impossible to live even according to Nature, much less according to Grace: yet man expects it of his fellow-man that he shall live according to Grace while he renders it impossible for him to live according to Nature: reversing God's order of "*first that which is natural*," and resulting in social revolt and national overthrow. Wealth of natural life must precede wealth of spiritual life. A healthy bodily life goes a long way towards producing healthy spiritual conditions; and of course *vice*

versâ; but if Nature be put out of gear, Grace looks in vain for many a lost opportunity.

Peace! "What peace so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel?"

Man is at war within. The Physician and the Lawyer may do something towards dealing with the symptoms of this internal strife. But their probes, their purges, their emetics and their tonics, their red-tape and their rhetoric cannot take away the cause of the division and disunion. Even the Priest who can often do so much when the two other agencies have failed, is at a loss when the patient cannot forgive *himself*, when he is the victim of self-torture, a torment to himself.

Now, what is the reason of this lack of inward peace which distinguishes man so unhappily from the other and in this narrowed respect, *superior* animals?

Science must observe, and if she can, explain it. Science instead of being hostile to religion must include it; since science in general includes and sums up the results of all and each of the particular sciences, of which Theology is one.

Science tells us in the most scientific of all books, being inspired by Omniscience and leaving no fact in its survey unrecorded, if some are unexplained—that Man, unlike the ox or the ass, is not what he ought to be, nor what he was intended to be. He is like some

dethroned monarch trying to accommodate himself to poorer circumstances. A king he is and he knows it. He has royal ideas, kingly instincts and imperial aspirations ; and yet he is there on his dunghill without force or spirit to re-establish himself upon his throne.

The Bible is a study of man. It is addressed to the people, being the Great Popular Educator, and therefore it speaks in homely, nursery phrases, that it may make itself understanded of the people. It tells us that man was made in the image of God, but that he finds himself possessed with a devil: that two wills strive within him for the mastery: that having been expelled from the Paradise of Innocence, he has to fight his way to the Heaven of Holiness. He becomes discontented and disgusted with his own doings, which he finds to be after all only so much undoing and misdoing. Athirst for Happiness as well as for Glory, he drinks deep of every tempting draught. He drains the foul goblet of filthy lust, but only to find his thirst increased and ever increasing. Then he will have none of the body, and plunges into excesses spiritual or intellectual with no better result. His chant is a moan or a miserere from beginning to end, from morning till night.

Instead of being at home, he finds that he is marching through an enemy's land, attacked from without, betrayed from within, with no

sign of an Angel to minister unto him as he lies faint and bleeding on the battlefield. He loses faith in himself, in God, in everything. But he can't be an Atheist though he tries; for the consonance between Ego and Nego is but arbitrary and artificial. He is no happier in denying everything than he was in believing everything, if so happy.

He discovers that God and Nature alike abhor both negations and vacuums. It is not enough to have driven the enemy out of the land. We must occupy it. To get rid of vice we must plant virtue. Pursued and tempted by lust he finds the cure in wholesome self-absorbing love. He looks around him, next him, and finds some one to be loved not merely for their own but for Christ's sake. Is he the slave of drink, he sees that if that devil be driven out, his room must quickly be filled by some more worthy tenant, or he'll be back again and seven more and worse along with him. In fact he learns that the Empty Bottle system will not work. Man must have some kind of intoxication, wholesome or otherwise, so he finally follows Saint Paul's advice and substitutes the spiritual for the spirituous or carnal.

But there is no peace as yet. No, the hour is not yet come! It is one of those moments when, as we have said, the horrors of peace would be worse than the horrors of war. He

must see the thing through—right to the bitter end. Never again can the enemy be allowed a shred of independence.

But meanwhile what agony! what suffering! "Blessed Book!" cries he as he reads his Bible through his tears: "Blessed Book which is not afraid to print all I am going through! No other book dare. Perhaps if it did, it would do it so grossly and clumsily that it would demoralize me. This Book never does that. Its heroes, moreover, are none of them perfect. They each seem to have had a terrible battle to fight, just like me. I thank this Great Book for its sympathy. And yet it knows me through and through. Scarcely a page without my portrait. Yet it is never shocked! It seems to expect what has happened rather than otherwise. It is like a doctor in that. Very little good he would be if he were easily shocked! For human nature is very shocking to those who are not mothers and nurses born and bred, and who don't mind putting their hands to any filth for the poor patient's sake. That is who and what I want. And I find it here:—

"Put me not to rebuke, O Lord, in thine anger: neither chasten me in thy heavy displeasure.

"For thine arrows stick fast in me: and thy hand presseth me sore.

"There is no health in my flesh, because of

thy displeasure: neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sin.

"For my wickednesses are gone over my head: and are like a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear.

"My wounds stink, and are corrupt: through my foolishness.

"I am brought into so great trouble and misery: that I go mourning all the day long.

"For my loins are filled with a sore disease: and there is no whole part in my body.

"I am feeble and sore smitten: I have roared for the very disquietness of my heart.

"Lord, thou knowest all my desire: and my groaning is not hid from thee.

"My heart panteth, my strength hath failed me: and the sight of mine eyes is gone from me.

"My lovers and my neighbours did stand looking upon my trouble: and my kinsmen stood afar off.

"They also that sought after my life laid snares for me: and they that went about to do me evil talked of wickedness, and imagined deceit all the day long.

"As for me, I was like a deaf man, and heard not: as one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth.

"I became even as a man that heareth not: and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

"For in thee, O Lord, have I put my trust: thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God.

"I have required that they, even my enemies, should not triumph over me: for when my foot slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me.

"And I, truly, am set in the plague: and my heaviness is ever in my sight.

"For I will confess my wickedness: and be sorry for my sin.

"But mine enemies live, and are mighty: and they that hate me wrongfully are many in number.

"They also that reward evil for good are against me: because I follow the thing that good is.

"Forsake me not, O Lord my God: be not thou far from me.

"Haste thee to help me: O Lord God of my salvation." *

Lord, Thou knowest all my desire! What comfort rings in these words and in that thought! There is some one then who knows, some one who cares.

I find *peace* in accepting this condition of *warfare*. I cannot, as a soldier, expect peace, so long as the King's country is full of rebels, and his flag trampled underfoot. I must get my happiness out of this conflict. I must go with joy into every encounter. I

* Ps. xxxviii. (Prayer-book version).

must cultivate this warfare as a profession. I must study the tactics of the enemy and his terribly perfect system of espionage—so perfect that in the very heart of me there's treachery! As for the enemy, I am as good a man as he, and better. He has no monopoly of skill! If he is a bit of a serpent, I must be the same: cunning as a serpent: harmless as a dove.

Soldiers who are obliged to stay at home read the story of the distant war. How they long to join in the game! For to them it is a game. They take it cheerfully. Like them I must count it all joy when I have to escape the pits and ambushes of the Tempter. I must not condescend even to hate the enemy too roundly; because passion is unsteadying and blinding. Let me keep cool. It is a game.

"My Brother, count it all joy when thou fallest into divers temptations."

This is a hard text to accept at first. But when we reflect that at the font we were enlisted as *Soldiers* of the Cross, and that to fight and to endure hardness is the business and profession of a Soldier, then we brace ourselves to the day's work. We must not only be strong, but also of a good courage and of right good cheer. Temptation is the attack of an adversary, permitted to try our mettle and to strengthen our spiritual life by provoking us to struggle and resistance. We have in

our hands a Handbook of the enemy's devices and of the rule for our own drill, discipline, and scouting tactics. Weapons also are provided. The enemy may be Goliath, but *we* are *David*. He comes to us in the name of all that is false. We go forth against him in the Name of all that is true; and we are bound to win, providing we combine in our method of attack both *courage* and *cheerfulness;* counting it all joy! Yes, what a joy it should be for us to take part in the great struggle of Good against Evil, keeping in mind that we are fighting not only for ourselves, but for God and our Brethren. David was fired with patriotism. So was Jael. The soldier is the most unselfish being in the world. He is not fighting his own battles. He bears no personal grudge against the enemy. He gives his service and his life for King and Country! And the better Christian, the better Soldier. The better Soldier, the better Christian. Constantine had to confess that his best troops were the Christians.

Well, well, we were to talk about Peace, and here we are preaching war!

Brethren, it is in maintaining this warfare with evil in a cheerful and therefore non-isolated way that we shall gain Peace of mind.

God will allow us a Victory or two, now and then, just to encourage us, but not enough to make us unwatchful. Each victory prepares

the way for the next. Having done for Goliath, we shall be all the cooler and cheerier when it comes to dealing with Sehon King of the Amorites or Og the King of Basan! "*Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee: and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee?*

"*Yea, I hate them right sore: even as though they were mine enemies.*"

But let us make sure of our disinterestedness.

"Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart: prove me and examine my thoughts.

"Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Out of this lifelong struggle shall come Everlasting Peace, one of the elements of Everlasting Happiness.

The longer the warfare continues, the better acquainted we become with the enemy's knavish tricks. We cease to fall so easily into his traps. In fact, we begin to set a few for *him*. He becomes our teacher: we speak of him as Our Friend the Enemy. We learn from him what mobility means; as he soon discovers to his own hurt.

At last, to our joyful surprise we see his heels. He is in headlong flight. If we had read our Hand-Book a little more carefully we should have been prepared for him; we should have noticed this hopeful hint: "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you."

It has come to pass at last! *Result:* satisfaction, but never self-satisfaction; because we have been fighting for God and Our Brother. It was no selfish struggle, and we can enjoy no selfish victory. It has come at last! Our strength has mightily increased, a fact which has rendered the enemy more wary and less confident in his attacks. Before, we were always in his way, to be surrounded or cut off. Now we are otherwise engaged, and our warfare is more wary. We avoid circumstances and surroundings favourable to his tactics. We do not sleep on our watch. But, truth to tell, our life has become so much wider, that our late foe seldom troubles us at all now. We are busy organizing and improving. He is off in search of other prey.

We enjoy our great Leader's confidence. He is able now to take us more intimately into His counsels, and we are becoming daily of more use. His sunshine is about our heart. Our false moves, our foolhardy escapades, our rash sorties, and our sorry discomfitures are all forgiven and forgotten by Him; but not by us! We keep them in store as so much humbling gear: and thus we have passed from our resolute warfare with sin to the Heaven of PARDON; of PEACE; and of a QUIET MIND.

"He showed them His Hands and His Side."

It is the Peace of God won by the Wounds of Jesus.

True Manliness, then, must be inspired by true *Godliness:* the Third in the Prayer-book order of the conditions of Man's Everlasting Happiness.

With this we will now deal.

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS:

PART III

GODLINESS

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS

PART III

GODLINESS

Pietas autem ad omnia utilis est, promissionem habens vitæ quæ nunc est, et futuræ.

But Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.—1 Timothy iv. 8.

WEALTH, Peace, *and* Godliness; *or* Wealth and Peace, with *Pandemonium.* Such is the alternative for man or nation.

It has been tried over and over again. Each of the Great Empires of the mighty Past enjoyed in its turn Wealth, Peace, and—*what?*

Nearer home and nearer our own times the answer has more than once been given.

The flood-tide of Wealth and Peace is the crisis in every nation's history. When we have eaten and are full—that is the dangerous hour!

There can be nothing so dangerous and so deadly as Wealth and Peace without Godliness. And why? Because it is to enjoy the Gifts

without the Giver. When the Giver sees man or nation enjoying His Gifts for their own sake, then He asserts Himself. He is a jealous God. He is Love. And when Love is treated with indifference it becomes a Consuming Fire.

Too many of us desire Wealth and Peace without being inconvenienced (as we think) by Godliness. As a terrible matter of fact we want what God has to give, but we do not want Him. His presence would be a check upon that vain pursuit which we call happiness. We treat the Majesty of Heaven very much as we do the baker. Let Him deliver His Bread and go His way! We give our orders for life and money and sunshine, and expect them to be duly left at our door. If not, we grumble. Do we so much as stop to say thank you for them? This world belongs to its Maker, whoever and wherever He may be; not to us hourly tenants. Yet we think we may run riot in it, battening on its fruits and trampling the residue with our feet. If we continue we shall afford History another example of Babel, which ever ensues when man or multitude is cursed with Wealth and Peace apart from Godliness.

It is not for man's health. He surfeits and chokes himself therewith. Wealth and Peace become monopolies of the few. They are enjoyed apart from that responsibility which Godliness enjoins. The Few feast. The Millions starve.

Man cries "Peace, Peace!" meaning simply that there is no war—*Man's* Peace, not God's! Therefore ominous echoes are heard to mutter: "*No* Peace. *No* Peace!" Godliness is wanting. Sympathy is wanting. So Jerusalem becomes a heap of stones. Lacking the cement of Charity, it tumbles into ruins.

Wealth and Peace without Godliness would not produce happiness. Ask those who have a godless monopoly of those good things if they are happy? They will say No! And they wonder why? The reason is that after all they have but one back and but one belly and one brain apiece; and heaping clothes on the one, cramming food into the other, or rubbing facts into the third does not satisfy another hungry part of our constitution, namely the *heart*. We are too small for those large things—or too large for those small things? Which is it?

We must clothe other backs, fill other bellies, and educate other brains, and then—and *then*, we shall get some real pleasure and enjoyment out of what we *have*, through what we *are!* It is not what we have or have not that can make us happy or otherwise, but what we *are;* for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. They often worry him to death.

Here we come to the essential difference between Wealth, and Peace, and Godliness.

Wealth and Peace are something to have. Godliness is something To Be: it is being godlike or godly.

All the wealth and peace of Heaven cannot hurt God, because He *is*, not only godly, but God. Yet it is the ruin of man unless he too be God, or godly. If he be that, then, as an individual or as a nation, you may crown him with honour and glory, and they will never spoil him; because he will never call them his own, or use them for himself, but for God; seeing that the exact opposite of selfishness is godliness. Selfishness will undo any man or any body-corporate of men, and it must finally undo Satan himself; because selfishness is incapable of either scientific observation, or of exact knowledge, being unable to grasp men and things as they really are. Having no sufficiently wide outlook, looking merely to his own interests, a selfish man measures everybody and everything by *himself*, and thus befogged and narrowed, and ill-advised, he becomes blind and a fool.

Godliness is greatness as well as goodness, for its ideal is God. It looks at men and things as God looks at them, and is therefore the best equipment for the conqueror and ruler. Godliness, moreover, is the safeguard of wealth and the assurance of peace. It distributes the former and is always ready to pay the price of

the latter. Godliness in action is Charity. It diffuses wealth and peace, and at the same time attracts and unites in the bonds of love and gratitude elements that otherwise would become forces of disintegration and revolt ; thus rendering the possession of wealth and peace possible, without being dangerous.

Its ideal is Common Wealth, Common Work, Common Prayer, and Common Praise. It is therefore great gain. It pays. It is the best of all bargains. It is profitable for all things —useful in every way. It is good leaven leavening the whole lump: the life-blood circulating in every vein of the Body Politic ; its reservoir, whence it flows and whither it returns, the sanctified affections of the human heart. Its work is the constant removal of all that is stagnant and moribund in the body ; reforming, restoring, warming, beautifying.

Without its wholesome contact wealth becomes hard and self-centred ; and peace sluggish, time-serving and unsound. Godliness gives, blesses, enriches. It is gain, great gain. Each godly man is a source of strength to the community, and if all were godly the necessity for courts of justice, police and prisons, would be enormously reduced or would cease altogether. Great Gain!

The world is very wealthy ; Peace is its cry, and Happiness is still its quest. It cannot

enjoy its Wealth. It is in constant fear of the breach of its Peace; and all because it lacks Godliness.

The Church needs to be reunited and reorganized. The over centralization, so useful perhaps during the Middle Ages, has become dangerous. Its work is done. The Cæsarism which naturally haunts the City of the Cæsars must pass away and full play be given to the democratic element in the Church's divinely established government. The insolent and aggressive faction that seeks to monopolize its wealth and power by troubling its peace must be dislodged, disowned, destroyed.

When the spiritual wealth and peace of the Church Universal flows in diffused godliness throughout the whole body, when men of peace and good-will shall no longer be kept asunder by prejudice, or by intrigue; then war shall cease and controversy be still. Godliness is large and single-hearted, magnanimous, and all-pervading! Above all it is absolutely truthful; hating a lie. When he that letteth shall be taken out of the way, the world will soon become one parish; but saved from parochialism by use of the telescope of faith and the microscope of love. Let Europe arrange her Religion, and her Politics will arrange themselves.

We shall then get to know more of Brotherhood, and therefore more of Heaven. To

cross the Channel will no longer land the traveller's soul as well as his body in a foreign country.

But already the unity that is found in Christ is greater, wider than any that can be found outside of Him. Name if you can any association, political, social, philosophical, even if it be international, that has produced such world-wide unity of thought, ideal, and aspiration, as that of the still divided Church. The Carpenter of Nazareth is known and honoured all the world over. His Name is above every Name. His followers, however widely sundered by distance, language, surroundings, tradition, national traits of character, are nevertheless more intimately united by the bonds of a common Christianity than by those of common country, common language, and common laws; insomuch that a Christian Emperor writes to a Heathen Ruler: "Besides my murdered Envoy, a great number of Christian Brethren, Bishops, Missionaries, women and children, and those of your Majesty's subjects who are of my Christian Faith. . . . ." *

Here, to the astonishment of the Heathen despot, a bond is asserted which unites certain Chinese subjects more closely to the distant Christian Ruler than to their own monarch.

Show me if you can any other system,

* Emperor of Germany to the Emperor of China.

religious or political, which bridges such gulfs and levels such mountains!

You are at a loss. It is beyond your power. We are face to face with the standing miracle of the Church Universal.

Coming nearer home, there are many in England, France, or Spain, as elsewhere, who are ignorant of the names of their greatest men. How many in an English Village know the name of the late Poet Laureate for instance, or have read his works? Yet that English Villager, no matter how far he may wander, be it to the shores of the Mediterranean, the Baltic, or the Pacific, will never fail to find some other one to make with himself the Church's sacred Quorum, the Two or Three. The greatest stranger he can meet knows Jesus Christ. To have the same friend, a common ideal, the one book, and to have followed the same curriculum of ethical study, produces substantial unity beneath accidental differences. It is to enjoy the Wealth of Variety, with the Peace of Brotherhood, and the Gain of Godliness.

Let a little incident which carries all the weight of fact, illustrate this. The scene is the sunny border of the French Mediterranean shore. An English traveller has lost his way among the gardens of olives, vines, and figs. He finds himself suddenly intruding upon the privacy of a peasant family who are sitting

under the shade of their own vines and fig-tree at the back of a tiny cottage merely for summer use. The traveller asks his way. He is bidden to share the welcome shade. He willingly acquiesces. Madame, with the aid of her eldest daughter, is busily preparing the midday meal out-of-doors. When all is ready and her husband has come in from his work, Monsieur is further invited to partake. Seeing that this hospitality is offered willingly, again he acquiesces, as he is far from home, and there is no place to buy food. But he and they are strangers still: strangers by birth, by race, by language, diverse in temperament and national character, hereditary foes!

"Is Monsieur a Believer?" asks Madame when all are seated.

"Yes," replies the guest with some fervour.

"Then Monsieur is most welcome to all we have. There are so few Believers nowadays!"

Madame herself was not only a Believer, but a *Religieuse de Saint François de Sales dans le monde:* not living in a Convent, that is, but (what is also a godly vocation) looking after her household. She wore various medals and crosses; while her little boy was covered with scapulars secured with a system of tapes.

It was certainly not the Christianity of the

North, nor of England, as far as externals went.

Hosts and Guest had never exchanged look, thought, or word. What was it, therefore, that in a moment made these strangers kin, and more than kin? What was it?

I leave the Unbeliever to find an answer. In any case it was something which united them in heart, and made them know each other well, without any formal introduction or explanation whatsoever.

It was no identity of political principles, for the guest had no republican leanings, nor did he understand much of the working of Republican Government; while it is equally certain that the Hosts were in total ignorance of the principles of the British Constitution!

There was only one person in the whole world perfectly and generally well known in both their several homes, separated by a thousand miles of land and sea; known to each man, woman, and child in each of the two homes, better known in both than local heroes and sages of national renown! And not only known but acknowledged as supreme in both! No need to ask who it was. It was enough to name the name of JESUS—Jesus the Carpenter's son—of *where?* Of Rome? Of Babylon? Of London, Paris, or New York? Oh no! Of *Nazareth!* How was it done? How did He do it? It is a miracle.

It has certainly never been done before or since. One touch of this Man's Nature makes the whole world kin.

> "Christ's faith makes but one body of all souls,
> And love's that body's soul;
> What soul so e'er in any language can
> Speak Heaven like hers is my soul's countryman." *

That bond breeds confidence between man and man. It inspires, it makes men great and wise. It gives them insight and foresight. They become seers. Beginning with godliness they find wealth and peace: happiness, in short, and happiness that lasts.

You cannot very easily ticket such men and women as these. They are republican because they are royalist, and royalist because they are republican. They are liberal because they are conservative, and conservative because they are liberal. They are Protestant because they are Catholic, and Catholic because they are Protestant. They are as High as Heaven, they are Low as the Cross, they are Broad as Charity. They are everything but Narrow. Above all, they are Humble. They seek the well-being of all. They are Peacemakers. They are not come in their own name, but in God's. It is then for the Unbeliever to point to any other system, any other principles or any other Name

* Richard Crawshay, 1648.

under Heaven but that of Jesus of Nazareth which can lift men so high, or bring them so near!

Every man who recites the Lord's Prayer intelligently is a socialist. That Prayer is the Magna Charta of every Commonwealth. The granting of its petitions to those who have intelligently offered them is the assurance of Wealth: for where every one has all that God and man mean by "daily bread," no one will be in want.

It will be the assurance of Peace, for everybody forgives everybody else.

It will be the assurance of Godliness: For God is placed first: His Name is to be hallowed as a primary condition. He is placed in the midst: for His will is to be done.

He comes in at the end: For to Him is ascribed the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory for ever and ever!

The Socialism of the Christian Church is the only workable socialism: the only possible basis of happiness here or hereafter.

Everlasting Happiness, then, means everlasting health: the widest and the well-balanced development of Man's Body, Soul, and Spirit, under the most favourable circumstances.

True manliness will be seen to be synonymous with true Godliness.

Instead of all which, alas! What have we

here and now? We have Want, we have War, we have Worldliness, and Waste.

We have all that goes to swell a Litany. Everything but happiness.

God is happy because He is God. Man when he is godly, will be happy too, because he will then be Man.

The Kingdom of Heaven is the Kingdom of Happiness.

It is, mind you, the kingdom of children.

What fun! What glorious, boisterous, healthy, wholesome, fearless fun! It is life boiling over. Everybody for the first time in their lives is quite well; and is not ashamed to own it; fit, in short; for the Kingdom of Heaven is founded upon the survival of the fittest.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," cried the King rather sharply to some officious adults, "or there will be no Kingdom of Heaven at all!"

Child-life is happy life: unselfconscious life. The child's mind is clear of prejudice and unclouded by passion. It is a truly scientific mind; observing everything, rejecting nothing as impossible: shrewd, quick, penetrating, never rejecting a miracle simply because it *is* a miracle. Child-life is free from care and anxiety. It is lived in absolute dependence on father and mother, and is taken in small portions. The Lord's Prayer is especially the Child's Prayer.

The mind of the Child is susceptible to feelings of awe, decency, shame, fear, and love. In fact it is very much in harmony with that of its Creator. Of such, therefore, is that Happy Kingdom the Kingdom of Heaven : a Kingdom of Life, of strength, of repose ; but above all of Life—the characteristic of the Nursery and of the School. Of such, therefore, is the Kingdom of Heaven. Of such in their highest development : when what is merely childish and immature, shall have given place to what is childlike, and therefore capable of everlasting wonder, everlasting interest, everlasting curiosity, everlasting love, everlasting gratitude, everlasting Holy Family Life, everlasting union, everlasting association, everlasting friendship, everlasting employment, Everlasting Happiness.

Little has been said about what "they do in Heaven." Let us rather inquire what they *are* there ? And the answer is not far to seek. They are what they strove and longed to be here, only more so.

People standing by a newly tenanted grave often speculate as to whether the occupant has gone to Heaven. Wherever he be gone, he has taken his Heaven or Hell along with him : all he *can* take ; that is to say, *Himself*. Most of us live to say, sooner or later, Myself *am* Heaven or—terrible alternative—Myself *am* Hell ! For the Kingdom of Heaven or of

Hell is within us. So that the popular phrase needs correction. Instead of saying, he or she is in Heaven or in Hell, we ought rather to say, Heaven or Hell is in him, or in her. Our business should be not so much the getting of ourselves into Heaven, but the getting of Heaven into ourselves, or as much as our capacity will admit of.

Remember, Dear Brethren, that it is not what we have, what we do, or where we are, but *what* we *are* that matters. Heaven is a verb rather than a noun. It is positively and emphatically TO BE. God it is true reserved for Himself the use of the Indicative Mood Present Tense First Person Singular of this verb, when he said: I AM. But that gives the Keynote to all His following. Because He IS, therefore, we ARE.

Heaven is Being, not Having; nor even Doing.

Recall the very best hours of your life, when you were in so-called perfect health! Did you not almost court and covet knocks and bruises? The prospect of danger was a tonic. Risks and hair-breadth escapes were bracing to the nerves. To exist was ecstacy.

Or, recall those hours of pain, when notwithstanding twinge of nerve or twitch of muscle you were occupied in some all-absorbing work, living so to speak above the level of

detail as well as above the slavery of the letter.

Martyrs sing hymns in the flames, and welcome the lion's onset.

All this, because life is for the while intense and super-animal. Whether he be in the body or out of the body the man who is inspired cannot tell, and does not care. He forgets that he has a body. He loses sight of his surroundings. He is alive: quickened. The more abundant life is coursing through his veins. He is in Heaven for the moment, the third or the seventh as the case may be.

As for the Martyr, his enemies plunge him into hell, but his burning love for His Master, blazing more fiercely than the material flames turns them into a fiery chariot in which he mounts Elijah-like to Heaven!

Now here we have specimens merely and patterns, hints, and foretastes of the great possibilities of man's future; which those who study nature human or otherwise will do well to observe and note, that their science halt not.

No, it does not yet appear what we shall be. How can it? Giants were not giants in their cradles. But these well-ascertained experiences of man under his present limited conditions of life and environment serve to render our hope, as Christians, beyond and above this nursery sphere, reasonable, logical, and scientific; so

that without faltering we may declare our belief in the Resurrection of the Body and the Life Everlasting.

So much then, being possible under present unfavourable, nay foul conditions, science, observing and noting down the same, will be prepared to see these exceptions become the rule, should fair and favourable conditions be vouchsafed and continued. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive the great and good things prepared and kept in store by God for those that love Him. That is not surprising when we consider the extremely limited power of our present bodily apparatus, for the work of observation, comprehension or expression.

But, fitted with a new organism, furnished with lenses of greater magnifying power, drums of acuter sensibility, and electrical generators and motors of quickened force and superior conductive power: well, even this present material world would tell Man a vast deal more than it does now. It is a matter of sense and sensibility.

The inspired man and the Martyr are happy. But I notice that their happiness is not free from pain. There is exertion, agony, if you will; for there can be no life without activity. The Everlasting Happiness of Heaven may depend upon exertion which under our present

(so to speak) anæmic conditions would be self-conscious and therefore not pleasure but pain.

"A man can never die so long as he has got an idea." Well said and truly. Everlasting Happiness must depend therefore upon everlasting health and everlasting inspiration.

Our Saviour saw our lack. He came that we might have *life!* And have it more abundantly. Heaven is not only everlasting Life but Everlasting Love:

> "In whose deep waters selfishness dissolved,
> And was not."

Yes, great gain! To live is Christ, and even to die is gain! Here then are some rays of Everlasting Happiness that break through earth-born clouds and cheer us on as we ascend the mount to stand one day in the wide and everlasting sunshine!

Meanwhile let all who climb hold on their steep but heavenly way in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life; praying God the while as for some personal blessing that He will inspire the Universal Church with the Spirit of truth, unity and concord; and grant that all they that do confess His Holy Name may agree in the truth of His Holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Thus shall the Everlasting Happiness of Heaven begin to bless us here on earth; through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, in love of Whom standeth our Wealth, our Peace, our Righteousness; at Whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Almighty God, with whom do live the Spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity; We give Thee hearty thanks that it hath pleased Thee to deliver them that are gone before out of the miseries of this present sinful world; beseeching Thee, that it may please Thee, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect and to hasten Thy Kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of Thy holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. *Amen.*

V

THE NATIVITY

BOURDALOUE

Delivered before King Louis XIV. and his Court towards the close of his Ministry.

King Louis reigned A.D. 1643–1715.
Bourdaloue lived A.D. 1632–1704.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

Dixit illis angelus: Nolite timere: ecce enim evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum, quod erit omni populo: Quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator, qui est Christus Dominus in civitate David.—(Vulgate.)

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to you and to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.—S. Luke ii. 10, 11.

PROLOGUE

CHRISTMAS AT COURT

THUS, SIRE, spake the Angel of the Lord. But *he* spoke to Shepherds; to simple, single-hearted folk, that is; who far from the world, and keeping watch over their flocks, led a life as harmless as it was humble and obscure.

To them he announced a Saviour, who being born in a stable, and in making choice as He did of their poverty, had come down to honour their low estate; who, having for those men and

for their salvation divested Himself of His Majesty as God, was to be found in a manger, not merely clothed with human form, but circumscribed by the lot of a man unknown to fame like themselves ; suffering as they suffered, and—sin alone excepted—as they were in every particular.

I am not at all surprised therefore that to them he should have said : *Nolite timere*, "Fear not!" For, what had they to fear, asks Saint Chrysostom, in a Mystery whose every circumstance afforded them consolation ; in a Mystery which supplied them with every reason for blessing God and glorifying Him ; in a Mystery which made them acquainted with the happiness of their lot ; thereby rendering their misfortunes not merely bearable, but welcome, and even enviable. I say that I am in no way surprised that the Angel sent by God used language of this sort : "*Ecce evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum ;*" I bring you tidings which shall fill your hearts with joy ; and the tidings are these : That to you is born a Saviour—"*Quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator.*"

But finding myself under the necessity, as I do To-day, Christian People, of fulfilling the obligation of my Ministry, and having the honour to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the Court of the most Illustrious of Kings,* it

* Or, "in the presence of the rich and educated."

would have been well for me had the advantage enjoyed by that Angel of the Lord been mine also. Like him I announce the Birth of the Saviour of the world; but *I* have to announce it in the ears of a congregation to whom I doubt if it will prove a source of comfort. I announce a Saviour poor and lowly; but I have to make the announcement before the Great Ones of the world and to its rich men. *I* announce it to those who, for all they are Christians by profession, are none the less filled with worldly notions! What, therefore, Lord, am I to say to them? Of what terms shall I avail myself in setting before *them* the Mystery of Thy lowliness and of Thy poverty? Shall I bid *them*, Fear not? Their frame of mind being such as I suppose, that were to mislead them. Shall I bid them, Fear? That would be to miss the very spirit of the Mystery we are celebrating, and to lose those consoling thoughts which it inspires and which it ought to inspire even in the hearts of the greatest sinners. Shall I bid them mourn while the whole of Christendom rejoices? Or can I say, "Be of Good Cheer!" seeing that to contemplate a Saviour who comes condemning all their maxims must give them such grave cause for lamentation? I will bid them, O Lord, do *both!* And thus discharge more worthily the duty Thou hast given me to perform. I shall say

"Mourn! Rejoice! For I bring tidings which shall be to you at the same time a cause for fear and an occasion of joy." These two emotions, at first sight so contradictory, but arising simultaneously from the contemplation of the Mystery of Jesus Christ being born into the world, will furnish both the substance and the summary of what I have to say in the following Discourse; having first invoked the aid of Heaven through the intercession of that Mother—who of all mothers is most holy and most blest. *Ave Maria!*

It was the destiny of Jesus Christ to be manifested in the world as a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence; and by the secret and inscrutable counsels of Divine Providence to be set while here, at one and the same time, for the Fall of some and for the Rising again of others. *Ecce positus est hic in ruinam et in resurrectionem multorum.** Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.

Now the whole life of this Man Divine was but the fulfilment and the consequence of this prediction.

Not, therefore, without good reason did I determine to set forth His Holy Nativity as being in the foremost place a source of Fear and an occasion of Joy: a source of Fear when

* S. Luke ii. 34.

contemplating Him, Saviour as He is, as the Ruin of the unrighteous and the reprobate; an occasion of Joy when we regard Him as the Resurrection of sinners who are converted and have become enrolled among the number of the Elect of God.

Into this strait of doctrine let us now advance. I may say, indeed, that the whole process of salvation, so far as regards our relationship with God, consists in duly balancing these two contrary emotions: Fear and Joy. Hence it comes to pass that David when advising the Great Ones of the earth (whose especial need of such counsel God had taught him) addresses them in language as wonderful and as wise as it is sensible and judicious: "*Servite Domino in timore, et exultate ei cum tremore.*" * *Serve* the Lord with *fear*, and *rejoice* unto him with *trembling*. "If I am to rejoice at all, why," inquires Saint Chrysostom, "must it be with trembling? And why am I to tremble at the same time that I am called upon to rejoice? It is," replies this Holy Doctor, "because, with regard to God and in the interests of his own salvation, man, whether saint or sinner, ought never to be allowed the experience of joy except it be alloyed with awful fear; nor yet, on the other hand, of fear, however full of awe; except it be mingled with holy joy." For following the

* Ps. ii. 11.

Rule of Faith in its strictest exactitude, it is not for us to *fear* God without *trusting* Him, nor to *trust* in Him without at the same time *fearing* Him.

Now, I maintain; and here you have the Plan of my Discourse; I maintain that the Mystery of the Birth of Jesus Christ thoroughly understood, and devoutly meditated upon, is of all Christian Mysteries the one best calculated to arouse within us, both that wholesome fear and also that secret but solid joy.

I submit, that the sight of Jesus Christ born in a manger, furnishes us with potent reasons both for the one and the other: for *Fear*, if you be of the number of the worldly-minded, who, blinded by the Prince of this world, have forsaken the way of Salvation for the way of Society; for *Joy*, if having your eyes open, you are longing to become enrolled this very day among the number of those faithful Christians who are seeking God in spirit and in truth. *Fear*, if fully aware *why* Jesus Christ came into the world, and likewise *how* He came, you mark the contrast and contradiction which exist between Him and yourself. *Joy*, if, being once convinced of, and confounded by, the antagonism existing between Jesus Christ and yourself, you at length resolve to conform yourselves to His pattern and to take advantage of the opportunities for so

doing afforded you even by the very condition of life into which it was God's good pleasure for you to be born.

Fear! then, or Rejoice! according to the side you have taken and the character which most fitly describes you.

Are you on the world's side? Fear! For this Mystery will bring home to you truths of fearful import: as will be seen in the FIRST PART of this Discourse.

Are you already numbered, or are you to be numbered among those who are Christians indeed? Rejoice! For the Mystery is a Revelation of grace and of mercy infinite: as shall appear in the SECOND PART.

These, then, are the two emotions which you should experience as you present yourselves before the manger of your God. Receive His word with meekness, to the end that I may be able This Day to imprint it once and for ever upon your hearts; and meanwhile let me have your undivided attention.

THE NATIVITY:

PART I

A MYSTERY OF FEAR

THE NATIVITY

PART I

A MYSTERY OF FEAR

THE Salvation of man must begin with man's fear of the Lord; insomuch that charity, even the most godlike, unless it be founded and reared upon a fear of God's judgments, can be neither sound nor safe.

Not without good reason, therefore, in announcing to you To-Day this Great Mystery, do I direct your attention to that particular aspect of it which should excite in you this salutary fear; for which I now proceed to furnish you with some material.

Men of this present world, filled (if alas! such be the case) with its secular spirit, and ruling your lives according to its maxims, be afraid! Be afraid, because this Saviour who is born to you—owing to the idea, practical if you will, but futile and fanciful, which you have formed of Him; and considering the use, or I should rather say

the abuse, to which you put the compassion He manifests towards you—may, after all, Saviour as He most assuredly is! prove anything but a Saviour to *you!* Be afraid! He is a Saviour; but a Saviour whose coming is possibly for your confusion and your condemnation! Be afraid! For this Saviour can never remain an object of indifference to you. If He does not save you, He must of necessity damn you! * Harrowing thoughts these for worldlings!

But all you have to do, Dear Hearers, is to render them useful and profitable to yourselves by meditating upon them in a spirit of humble and sincere contrition.

Unto you, I say, is born a Saviour; one, however, for whom (because of the mistaken conception your prejudice has formed of Him) there can be no title so little appropriate as that of *your* Saviour.

Get at my meaning and you will be forced, in spite of your natural reluctance, to accept this gloomy fact; for though you are willing that He should save you, yet it is a matter of little concern to you that He should save you *from your sins!* You want Him to save you, but with the understanding that it shall cost you nothing.

You want Him to save you, but saved you decline to be by the means and the methods of

* A savour of death.

salvation provided by Him—a chapter of contradictions from first to last: contradictions, moreover, so monstrous in character that, scanty as are the shreds of religion you have still remaining, they may well arouse reflections This Day which should give you good cause for trembling.

Do not imagine that I exaggerate their grossness in order to terrify you with vain alarms. Suspect my expressions, rather, of being too feeble to enable you fully to apprehend their import and their range.

(*a*) You desire that this God new-born should be God your Saviour; but yet, with a confusion of ideas and an inconsistency of conduct of which you are possibly unaware, you care little that He should save you from your sins. Yet be it clearly understood, nevertheless, that the one and only thing that this Saviour does save from is from *sin*, and from nothing else whatever in the world; so that He can stand towards you in the relationship of Saviour only in so far as He is setting you free from the dominion of those passions, vices, and bad habits which are the sources of the sins whose unhappy slaves you are. If He be not delivering you therefrom; and if you—far from wishing to be freed—are in love with your bondage and your slavery, why then, argue as you may think fit, this God, supremely a Saviour, is for you but a Saviour in name; and every act of worship you

perform is either an act of self-deception, or a piece of hypocrisy.

Never did conclusion follow more ruthlessly than this one does from the principles and laws of that Christianity which you profess. "*Thou shalt call His name* JESUS," said the Angel to Joseph. And why? Because He shall save His people from the sins and the iniquities which overwhelm them: "*Vocabis nomen ejus Iesum; ipse enim salvum faciet populum suum a peccatis eorum.*" *

Let there be no mistake, Brethren; He does not say (it is the remark of Saint Chrysostom) Thou shalt call His name JESUS because He will deliver His people from the calamities common to man, whose stroke awakes man's lamentation. That sufficed for those old-fashioned Saviours who simply served as types of this One, and who were sent by God to the Jewish People as suited to them in their gross and carnal state.

But this JESUS whose birth we celebrate To-Day is destined for a mission higher and holier than theirs. To meet *our* case a redemption was needed far more thorough and complete. The ills of which *we* were to be healed were far more dangerous and more deadly than those with which the People of God were afflicted in Egypt; and it was from

* S. Matt. i. 21.

these, says Saint Chrysostom, that a Deliverer must be found.

Behold Him come! Not, I repeat, to save us from the adversities or misfortunes of this life. We should be unworthy alike of our profession and of our character as Christian men and women were such our limitations of His grace, or were we to allow our appreciation of His power as a Saviour to be measured by such a test as this. After no such a sort was He promised to us.

But behold Him come to save us from the world's corruption, from its lawlessness, and from the error of its ways! Behold Him come to free us from the yoke of our shameful passions and from the slavery of sin in which we are sunk; from the concupiscence of the flesh which holds us down, from the spirit of pride with which we are possessed; from our criminal attachments, our hatreds, our dislikes and our deadly jealousies! These are our real foes, and from such fatal bondage could we be rescued only by a God, who should also be our Saviour! For which purpose, moreover, He was willing to be born: *Ipse enim salvum faciet populum suum a peccatis eorum.* To save His people from their sins.

Now, tell me, Christian People, is it thus you have conceived of Him, and that you do still conceive of Him?

Examine yourselves, each one of you, in the presence of God.

Where is the ambitious man here among you, who, regarding his ambition as the plague of his soul, is in good faith anxious to be cured of it? Or the unchaste and voluptuous man, who, thoroughly wretched at being what he is, desires in downright earnest and as his supreme good to remain so no longer? Where is the selfish and greedy among you, who, ashamed of his dishonesty and his usurious tyranny, holds his avarice in heartfelt abhorrence? Or the woman of the world who, hearkening to the counsels of religion, is seized with horror at the thought of her unworthiness, and resolves to put an end to her love of herself?

This Saviour—from the sway of which imperious passion, or from what vicious and engrossing fancy has He up to the present moment set you free? If not, what do you know about Him as a Saviour? Or, granting that He is one, what evidence have you got to show that He is *yours?* What saving function has He performed, or have you given Him the chance of performing, on your behalf?

Seeing you to be thus evilly disposed, should I not be a prevaricator, were I to announce His coming as an occasion of joy? And if I am to prove a faithful Minister of the Gospel,

must I not tell you, on the contrary, as in fact I do—to undeceive yourselves, and to lament for your own sake? And why am I bound so to speak? Because so long as, being possessed by the world, you manifest such a criminal temper, the Saviour, though born, is not in any proper sense born for you; or to put it more exactly: though a Saviour is born, you profit as little by His birth as if He had never been born at all for you.

Ah, Christian People! let me here make a reflection sad enough for you as well as for myself: one which you will acknowledge to be both singularly striking and full of spiritual edification.

We are accustomed to bewail the lot of the Jews, who, notwithstanding the privilege they enjoyed in beholding the birth of Jesus Christ in their midst and for their sakes, have had the misfortune to lose all the fruit of that inestimable benefit, and to be their very selves those of all the peoples of the world who have least profited by the fact of that Holy Nativity. We commiserate them, and in so doing condemn them; but we are apt to let slip unnoticed the fact that in respect of their condition, or rather in the misery of it, they can claim an equality with ourselves.

For in what did the reprobation of the Jew

consist? In this: that in place of the true Messiah destined for him by God and of whom he stood in such desperate need, he pictured in his imagination *another* Saviour, fashioning him according to the grossness of his natural conceptions, and after the desires of his own heart. It consisted in his counting *Him* for naught who should have been the Liberator of his soul, while he dreamed exclusively of one to whom he might look for the restoration of his temporal well-being and prosperity; and that in thus confounding together these two kinds of salvation; or to speak more truly, in rejecting the one while vainly flattering himself with the hopes centered in the other, he missed them both: thus leaving himself destitute of any redemption whatsoever!

Here, says Saint Augustine, we see the cause of his perdition: *Temporalia amittere metuerunt, et æterna non cogitaverunt, et sic utrumque amiserunt.* They were afraid of losing things temporal, while they cared not for the things eternal, and thus they lost both.

And is it not this, My Dear Hearers, which is compassing our own destruction every day? For although we no longer look, as do the Jews, for a Messiah yet to come; though we hold us fast by Him whom Heaven has already sent us, yet is it not a fact—let us crimson with shame as we make the avowal—that to

judge from our behaviour, we are, as regards this Saviour sent by God, in the same blind condition as were the Jews, and in which we see them still, concerning the Messiah they look for and on whom their hopes are fixed?

Let me explain.

We call upon Jesus Christ as our Saviour; but we invoke Him in the same spirit as the reprobate Jew did. That is to say, we call upon Him in behalf of *temporal* blessings, while to those which are eternal we remain perfectly indifferent: *Temporalia amittere metuerunt, et æterna non cogitaverunt.*

Does adversity befall us? Is persecution raised against us? Is it our honour or our fortune that is at stake? Then, and not till then, do we have recourse to the God who *has* saved us already, and whom we would have to save us over again. And save us from what? Why, from some affair which has upset us, some painful malady from which we are suffering, from some disgrace which has brought us low. Yes! these are the evils which stir us up and put some life into our prayers; in which we demand not only with impatience but with importunity our preservation or our deliverance: *Temporalia amittere metuerunt.* They feared to lose things temporal! But suppose that we are suffering from the disorders arising from a state of habitual sin,

scarce a thought do we give to it that there is an Almighty Saviour ready to fly to our rescue! We make perhaps some one, poor, languid appeal to Him to look to the matter, exclaiming with the Prophet: "Haste Thee, O Lord, and draw me out of the horrible pit into which I am fallen!" And there we lie calm and undismayed, insensible to the pressing need of our condition: *Et æterna non cogitaverunt!* And they cared not for things eternal.

What do I say? Instead of running in search of a remedy, it is, quite possibly, the very thing we dread and would run away from. It may be that we are perverse enough to find in our sin a secret source of satisfaction, giving ourselves, in the bottom of our hearts, some credit for it, and making it our boast. Christians in name, we are in heart as Jewish as ever the Jews were!

And when we proceed to compare their faithlessness with our own, our own appears all the more condemnable, because *we* despise a Saviour whom we believe in; whereas the Jews in sinning against Him, so sinned because they knew Him not. And that should be enough to make us tremble!

(*b*) But *our* hearts are blinder still. We desire that this God-made-Flesh should be our Saviour, and we stipulate that our Salvation shall cost us nothing—one more contradiction

and a further cause for Fear! For He is a Saviour only upon one condition, namely, *that we save ourselves with Him and through Him.* Without our consent—the words are those of Saint Augustine, which you have heard a hundred times, and whose profound import I would have you gauge to-day—without our consent He created us; but without our co-operation it never has been and never will be His good pleasure to save us. It is His will that the work of our Salvation, or rather the *working out* of this great process, should depend upon ourselves, and that, without partaking of its glory, we should co-operate with Him in the task.

As our Saviour, He is come to do penance in our behalf; but without prejudice to that penance which we ourselves must perform and on our own behalf.

As our Saviour He prayed; He wept; He acquired merit for us; but it is His will that *our* prayers joined with *His* prayers, *our* tears mingled with *His* tears, *our* work hallowed by *His* work, should accomplish in us that redemption of which He is the Author, but of which He can never be the Finisher without our aid.

As our Saviour, even as He lay in the Manger He had become our Substitute; and from that day forth He began to sacrifice Himself for our sakes. But it is His will that we

should be ready to be sacrificed *with* Him ; and so strongly does He will it, to so great an extent has He made the efficacy of His own sacrifice for our salvation to depend upon ours, that, Saviour as He is—mark this well—what I mean is that, well disposed as He is towards us as our Saviour, loving us as He did to the point of becoming Man for our sakes ; yet, in spite of all His love—in spite of what it cost Him to be born among us just as we men are born—He had rather we perished, rather that we should be everlastingly excluded from among the number of the Predestined, than save us for nothing, with that gratuitous Redemption such as we understand it ; because under a show of magnifying His grace in attributing our Salvation to its sole efficacy, we should only be making use of it to augment our own disorder.

It follows then, and without alternative, that for us to be saved it must cost us something, as it cost Him! Such is the law which He has laid down: a law which Saint Paul obeyed with so much fidelity: *Adimpleo ea quæ desunt passionum Christi, in carne mea.** I am filling up in my own flesh that which was lacking of the sufferings of the innocent and virgin flesh of Jesus Christ: a law universal and absolute which God never has repealed and never will.

And yet, O man of the world, you would fain

* Col. i. 24.

be exempted from the action of this law; it seems to you too hard and burdensome, and you strive to shuffle off its yoke. You wish to be saved, but your salvation must be effected without condition and free of charge. You are quite ready, providing no demand be made upon you in the way of self-surrender or of self-control, of effort, or of victory over self; you are willing to accept salvation but not to pay for it, or to give anything on your side or of your own. For, as a matter of fact, what is it costing you? Or dare you assure me that you are co-operating in any one particular? What are you giving up for God's sake? Or to what severity are you subjecting yourself?

But, on the other hand, God would have me tell you on His behalf that, so long as you thus entrench yourself, the salvation which Jesus Christ is come to offer to the world is not for you at all, and that you can lay no claim to it. Hence you may conclude whether the Birth of this God-Man possesses any elements of encouragement for such as you.

(*c*) Again: you want Him to save you, but by a third and to me no less astounding contradiction than before, you decline to be saved by the means and the method which He has made choice of for your salvation.

Planned and determined upon as these means have been by His Eternal Wisdom, yet they do

not commend themselves to you! Consecrated in His own Person, invested with the Authority of His example, you cannot away with them! And what are they? Hatred of the world and of yourself; detachment from the world and from its good things; renunciation of the world and of its pleasures and honours; poverty of spirit, lowliness of heart, mortification of the senses and austerity of life.

All this shocks and fills you with disgust. You would prefer means more in accordance with your own notions or less contrary to your inclinations; yes, and I tell you that for that very reason you ought to tremble! If you ask why, I answer that—your notions and inclinations apart—it is certain on the one hand that this God new-born into the world will never save you by any other means or methods than those He has already determined for your salvation; and it is evident, on the other, that so long as you are resolved to follow your own ideas and inclinations, those means can never save you.

Such, then, is the mournful Mystery which I have in the first place to announce to you—more mournful still if, being aware that it is so, you fail to profit by that knowledge.

But I will endeavour to make this plainer by means of the following illustration. It will

probably startle you, and pray Heaven it may startle you sufficiently to make you recognize your masked infidelity and lead you to the adoption of notions more truly Christian!

Now tell me, My Dear Hearers—suppose God had sent us a Jesus Christ quite different from Him in whom we believe. If, for instance, there had come down from Heaven a Saviour as favourable to human greed as He whom we adore is hostile to it; if, instead of announcing to you, like the Angel, that this Messiah was poor and lowly, born in the obscurity of a stable, I were to assure you that that was not the truth, that you had been misled—that He was a Saviour of quite a contrary description: born amid pomp and splendour, endowed with princely wealth and abundance, heir to life's ease and pleasure; and that such were the means and accessories involved in your salvation and upon which He had resolved to found His religion; if (by a reversal of things, impossible of course, but not beyond our powers of imagination to conceive,) if the case stood thus, and that which I now call a supposition were matter of fact—then just point out to me what you would have to remodel in your opinions and to reform in your conduct before you could adapt yourself to this new Gospel.

In changing your Creed would you be obliged to alter your Conduct? Would you find it

necessary to renounce being what you now are, in order to become what this Saviour would have you to be?

Would you not, on the contrary, without altering one detail of your behaviour, find yourselves to be true Christians for the first time in your lives?

And would you not have cause for congratulating yourselves upon the discovery of a system of religion on which your salvation hinged, falling in so well with your tastes and your tendencies, no less than with those rules of life which are laid down for you by the world? Would it not be under such circumstances as *those* that I should bid you "Fear not?" For, think what a grand occasion of jubilation it would be for you: *Evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum!* *

Why not? Unto you is born a Saviour—a Saviour, too, who is quite to your mind, the very one you were wishing for; such a convenient sort of Saviour; a Saviour in following whose principles you will be able to gratify all your lusts—a Saviour who far from rebuking them will grant them his sanction and approval!

At the sight of such a Saviour as this—"BE OF GOOD CHEER!"

Should I not be fully justified in addressing you after this sort, and as you listened, your

* "I bring you tidings of great joy."

heart filled with a secret joy, would you not be saying to yourself the while: "Ha! that is the God and the Saviour for me!"

Well, Christian People, I feel bound to acknowledge that under this new system of religion you would have good reason to rejoice! But you have too much intelligence not to perceive that what would under those circumstances prove an occasion of rejoicing ought to thrill you with terror To-Day! For, since—supposing this pretended Gospel to be true—I should then be able to tell you I was the bearer of such *glad* tidings; yet in proclaiming a Gospel of a directly opposite character, I am obliged to make use of language of a totally different sort.

At the risk of disturbing the joy of the Church, which is a sacred joy, I am bound to upset *yours*, which, from the blindness of your outlook, is a joy as presumptuous as it is mistaken. To you I must cry, "Tremble!" "Why?" Because unto you is born a Saviour; but a Saviour who seems to be come into this world on the sole errand of confounding and condemning you; a Saviour who is contrary to all your inclinations; a Saviour who is the enemy of the world and of all its good things; a Saviour who was poor lowly, and afflicted!

Troublous Truths! But for whom? For you, Men of the world—for you, that is, whose riches are in this present world, who are

absorbed in your abundance and intoxicated with your good fortune: for you, Men of Ambition, puffed out with a hollow grandeur and lovers of worldly display: for you the sensualists and voluptuaries of this world, who worship self and whose preoccupation is pleasure!

And yet!—Now that we have dwelt upon this Mystery of Fear, this Mystery of Woe, which I descry at first sight in the Birth of God-made-Man: O Fellow Christians, let us turn at last to the Mystery of Consolation therein enshrined and see what portion I can find for you!

It will form the SECOND PART.

THE NATIVITY:

PART II

A MYSTERY OF JOY

THE NATIVITY

PART II

A MYSTERY OF JOY

TRIVIAL, as in the estimation of God, the distinctions existing between the various classes and conditions of human life may appear; and pride Himself as He may, that He treats all men as equals, regarding neither rank nor fortune, and being without respect of persons; "*Non est personarum respector Deus**; God is no respecter of persons; yet it is none the less certain, Christian People, that in the Order of Grace, God's preference (if I may venture to use such an expression) has always seemed to be for the Poor and the Humble rather than for the Rich and the Great. Content herein to reverence the counsels of God who according to the Apostle has mercy on whom He will have mercy, taking vengeance on whom He will take vengeance; we make no attempt to discover the

* Acts x. 34. In the edition *Sixti V., et Clementis VIII.*, we read *acceptor*.

reason for this predilection; a predilection on God's part preached to us from every page of the Gospel; but which is thrust under our notice with plainer and more direct emphasis in the august Mystery which we celebrate To-Day.

For who were they to whom God first revealed the Nativity of His Son? Shepherds; poor men, that is, tied to their daily toil; men unknown to the world, content with the obscurity of their position and the simplicity of their life. These, then, were the men, says Saint Ambrose, excellently, chosen by Jesus Christ to form His first Elect; these were they whom He first called to His acquaintance, whose earliest homage He was willing to accept, who appear before us as the first members of His Household and His Birth-Day Guests.

His cradle is thronged by these men, while the public authorities of Judæa, the well-to-do folk of Jerusalem, the Learned and the Intellectual members of the Synagogue, are, so to speak, overlooked and left to themselves; remaining in the darkness of their unbelief, and having apparently no part whatever in the Nativity of the Saviour.

Yes, Brethren, writes Saint Paul to the Corinthians,* here you behold the first-fruits of your calling—the things that are weak chosen to confound the things that are mighty;

* 1 Cor. i. 26, etc.

the Simple chosen to confound the Sage; the things that according to the world are vile and refuse, chosen to confound what the world counts miraculous and belauds to the skies.

From such small beginnings did Christianity emerge. Thence also the Church took its rise —that Church which was at this time shut up within the stable of Bethlehem; since outside its walls JESUS CHRIST was as yet unknown.

And it is a reflection, O you that are highly exalted in the earth, and who are now listening to my words; which ought to cause you great uneasiness To-Day, and might even drive you to despair, had not God of His tender mercy made provision for your case! Take courage, therefore; and, convinced as you are about to be, of His boundless compassion, you shall, in spite of the hindrance of your worldly position, place your whole trust and confidence in Him.

For here I shall present three great sources of consolation drawn from the very Mystery whose awful import has just been brought home to us.

Give me your undivided attention. Having already meditated upon this ineffable Mystery with fear and trembling, you shall now taste its joy: *Ecce evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum!* Behold! I bring you glad tidings.

In fact, however sorely you may be exposed to the corruption of the Age, and how far soever you may have wandered from the Kingdom of

God, you will never be cast off by Jesus Christ. Far indeed from casting you off! Has He not come unto the world for the sole purpose of drawing you closer to Himself? A gracious attitude which should be reciprocated on your part. No matter how striking may have been the apparent contrast between *your* condition of life and that into which Jesus Christ was born; yet, remaining just as you are, it depends upon yourself alone to replace that contrast by a holy resemblance—an important secret of your Predestination which should never be left out of sight.

It matters not what dangers there may be in human greatness, or what anathemas have been hurled against the riches of this world; you may still make use of them as so many means specially provided for doing honour to Jesus Christ, and of rendering Him that peculiar homage which He awaits at your hands; an incalculable advantage which you are in duty bound to profit by, and which should form the ground of your assurance.

Let us meditate a moment longer upon truths so touching. No, My Dear Hearers, although Jesus Christ willed to be born in poor and low estate, He has not on that account rejected earthly greatness; and I have no fear of giving you offence when I say that from His Birth onward, far from despising it, He honoured it to

the point of seeking it out and attaching it to Himself. Of this fact the Gospel we have just read * affords an evident proof; for at the same time that this God who is our Saviour called to His cradle the poor Shepherds, He also summoned thither the Magi, who were men of wealth and influence—Kings, if Tradition may be trusted. For the former He sends an Angel. For the latter He makes a Star to shine. Coming to know and to worship Him, the former leave their flocks; while the latter forsake their Fatherland, their property, their princely State As for deciding whether of the twain worshipped Him with most acceptance, or became the more dear to Him: I shall not at present make any such attempt. Setting all comparison aside, however, it is at least certain that both are received in the stable of God-become-Man. It is at all events a fact that this God veiled in Infant Form manifests Himself to both, and that the preference He shows for the Lowly by no means excludes the Great.

Now, O Men of the World, ought not this one reflection to restore your confidence? Does it not more than suffice for your comfort and encouragement? Hence follows, however, something still more consoling for you.

And what may that be?

* Holy Gospel for the Epiphany.

The well-established fact that Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Mystery of His Nativity, apart from any predilection He may entertain for one class rather than for another, has, after all, and in reality, done very much more for the Great than for the Lowly; and that the Great whom He has called are, in a sense, much more indebted to Him.

How can that be?

Because, says Saint Chrysostom, it needed a much louder call to attract the Great and Influential of the Age—such as the Magi—to Jesus Christ than it did to win the Shepherds, whose ignorance and powerlessness were likely to predispose their hearts towards the lowliness of the Gospel. In these last, neither character nor circumstances offered any resistance to God; whereas in the former, the grace of God had everything to encounter and to overcome; namely, the world with all its lusts and allurements.

Nevertheless, it is a miracle which grace has wrought, the signal victory which the Faith of Jesus Christ new-born has carried against the world: *Hæc est victoria, quæ vincit mundum fides nostra.** This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Faith triumphant and victorious! Which, despite the world's pride, has acquired an

* 1 S. John v. 4.

influence over the spirits of men mighty enough to make them worship in the form of a Little Child the Word and the Wisdom of God ; which, notwithstanding the profligacy of the world, has so far won the heart of man that it can pluck thereout the deepest-rooted passions,* and is able to bring it into subjection to the yoke of Christ.

Be you, therefore, who or what you may, and the rank you take in Society of what degree soever ; can you henceforth complain that your God disfavours the class or calling to which you belong, or that it estranges you from Him ?

No, Christian Brethren ! There is neither estrangement on the one hand nor disapproval on the other. Your station in life does not alienate you from God ; for you see that He has blessed it with unstinted advantages. He does not condemn it, since one of his first cares in coming into the world was to *hallow* it in the persons of the Magi, and to reform it in your own. Its abuses and disorders He does rebuke He rebukes its ostentation ; He rebukes its luxury ; He rebukes its effeminacy ; He rebukes its hard-heartedness and its iniquity ; but while rebuking these He does not condemn the position itself, since for your own advantage as well as that of your rank, He opens the treasure-house of His pity this very day, scattering far and wide its store so wholesome and so rare !

* *E.g.* the case of S. Augustine.

Being the God of all sorts and conditions of men, and coming as He does for the salvation of every child of man without distinction or discrimination of station or of rank; He desires that from His cradle forwards, Rich and Poor, Master and Man, should each be represented in His Kingly retinue.

Draw near! Draw near then, one and all! Come to His cradle! Come one! Come all! He is calling you from His cradle. He is stretching out His arms to you from His cradle. There in His cradle He is longing with one Benediction to bless us all alike and altogether!

And yet, what agreement *can* there be between Poverty and Wealth, between Lowliness and Grandeur, between Misery and Careless Ease?

My answer to that query shall be a statement already advanced, and which I now reassert.

I said that it is for you, and for you alone, without changing your condition, to make yourselves like Jesus Christ as He was when born into this world; and that it is for you, notwithstanding all the contrariety existing between your condition of life and His, to establish that perfect conformity between them both on which is based, according to Saint Paul, man's predestination to Eternal Life.

In order to be known of God and to become a partaker of His Glory you must bear the character of this LITTLE CHILD just born, and

be made like unto Him, since it is with reference to Him, and to Him alone that we can accept the familiar injunction in its strict and literal sense: *Nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli, non intrabitis in regnum cœlorum.** "Unless ye become as this little child you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

At first sight there is certainly much to disturb, much even to dismay you; but listen to what I have to add, for I submit that it is neither impossible nor even difficult for you, *though continuing in your present rank of life*, to achieve this heavenly resemblance. How so? Because, *as Christians*, you can be at the same time *great* and *humble, rich* but *poor in spirit*, men of *might* and *power*, yet *meek* and *circumcised of heart.*

Now, so soon as you add humility to your greatness, gentleness to your power, detachment from riches to your riches themselves; so soon as this is done, then there ceases to be any incongruity between the low estate of Jesus Christ and the rank taken by yourself.

On the contrary, it is just your position which enables you to conform most perfectly to this Pattern of the Predestinated. It is just that which, as you move in Society, turns each one of you into a more highly finished copy of this Pattern. The chief characteristic of this

* S. Matt. xviii. 3.

Saviour of whom we speak was not precisely to be poor and humble, but *to be great, and at the same time humble;* or rather to remain humble while being Greatness Incarnate ; for His lowliness did not prevent His being the Son of the Most High !

Now, this is a distinction uniquely and specially your own, pertaining to that exalted rank where God has placed you, namely, the opportunity of becoming His closest imitators.

They who, either from the obscurity of their birth or the mediocrity of their fortune, are lost amid the crowd, cannot, it seems to me, raise themselves to this high standard. To however lofty a level of holiness they may have attained, their humility cannot express or represent that of a God Undone. In order to do that they must be in the enjoyment of some worldly dignity or hold high rank.

A great man, lowly in his own eyes, who without ever forgetting that he is a sinner and a mortal among mortals, walks before God with reverence and fear—the great man who with David can say to God, "Lord I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks," *Domine, non est exaltatum cor meum, neque elati sunt oculi mei.** I am not dazzled by the splendour of the world around me, neither have I been hurried by my

* Ps. cxxxi. 1, etc.

pride into enterprises too high for me, or contrary to charity and equity, *Neque ambulavi in magnis, nec in mirabilibus super me.* A great man dominated by dispositions such as these is the true Christian; one who humbles himself like this HOLY CHILD, cradled in the stable of Bethlehem: *Qui se humiliaverit sicut parvulus iste.* And it is to him, to a great man of this sort, that I will venture to address, on my own behalf, these words of our Blessed Lord. *Hic major est in regno cœlorum:** "The same is greatest in the Kingdom of God." A great man upon earth who is sanctified after this sort, is not merely great, but the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven!

Thus, therefore, does the Saviour of the world attract to His cradle the Rich and the Powerful no less than the Poor and the Unknown.

And those Great People—those rich folk—may I ask once more what they *are*, or, rather, what they *ought to be?* Let us at any rate compare them with the example afforded by the Magi: so appropriate to the place where I am speaking, and whose connection is so intimate with the Mystery which I announce.

Ah, Christian People, these were Great Men, whose greatness served merely as a background, setting forth in the light of their daily conduct

* S. Matt. xviii. 4.

the contrast of their profound humility, of their prompt obedience, and an entire submission to the will of Heaven, as they followed the Star of that God who, having humbled Himself, now bids them come and behold Him!

Here, therefore, you have Men truly Great, to whom the God of the Humble makes Himself known as well as to the Lowly. Here, therefore, you have Rich Men, who, far from setting their hearts upon their riches, lay all their treasure at the feet of the Lamb, taking credit to themselves for thus renouncing it: Rich Men whom the God of the Poor does not despise; because, in the midst of their abundance, He finds them to be more truly poor in spirit than even the poor themselves.

Have you not, therefore, good reason for thanking Heaven again and again—*you*, I say, who, in your exalted position, and with your wealth, are nevertheless enabled to share the same advantages as the Poor? And if you enter thoroughly into the Spirit of the Religion you profess, have you not cause to tender to God an eternal act of thanksgiving, seeing that He has bestowed upon you such abundant facilities for your own sanctification in those very circumstances which at first sight appeared incompatible with it?

I am prepared to go still further; for no

matter how grave the danger attaching to the enjoyment of worldly greatness, no matter what weight of condemnation may have been heaped upon temporal riches, I here advance a third proposition, no less incontestable, namely, that you have nothing to do but make use of the same in order to render to Jesus Christ on His coming into the world that particular homage and worship He expects from you. And this is how I apprehend the situation. In His character of a God that is *lowly* He wishes to be *honoured* and *glorified;* and as a God that is *poor*, He would be *relieved* and *comforted.* This double tribute He requires of *you;* and in paying it, you secure the benediction of your worldly position, which is this: ability and opportunity to consecrate to Jesus Christ what might otherwise prove the fatal cause of your damnation and loss—a Harvest of grace for you, if you have but the skill to gather it.

Let me explain.

As a God who is in lowly circumstances, He wishes to be honoured and glorified; wherefore He looks for worshippers among those who are of noble birth—worshippers indeed! Men of eminence and of worth prostrating themselves before His manger do Him greater homage and glorify Him more than any Shepherds of Judæa can with all their enthusiasm and warmth!

Nothing, in short, can make more directly for

His honour and glory than to receive the homage of the Great; and on whom should He depend if it be not upon you to give Him that glory of which He is so jealous? Why is it, do you suppose, that you find yourself dowered with influence and authority in the world? What reason had God for making you what you are? Is there any limit to your capacity for serving Him? What can the rest of the world do in comparison?

It is for you to see that the religion of this God-Man is treated with respect and reverence. The more speedy setting up of His worship: its greater security: its universal acceptance: this must be *your* work, accredited by your example. What use can you make of your power more worthy, *so* worthy indeed as this? And at what cost? Your own good will and pleasure!

It is in this light that you should regard your position, and only so regarding it are you justified in allowing it to absorb your affections or to afford you pleasure. Otherwise, it should cost you many a bitter pang; but you will find consolation in the thought that your rank and worldly standing render it more easy for you than for others of less degree to uphold the greatness and the glory of His cause, who meets us as a God of self-abasement and privation.

But let us hasten on. As a God without means, He needs to be relieved and helped, not

so much in His own Person as in that of His members whom we call the Poor; for To-Day I should indeed fail in the discharge of my Ministry were I to forget these members of Jesus Christ. Little of the Christian as you may have about you, you experience a godly jealousy as you observe those happy highly-favoured Magi, who having emerged from the confines of the distant East, would not appear empty-handed before this Saviour, but offered Him gifts which He both accepted and approved.

And I, for my part, have to tell you, that from *your* hands He awaits and would receive like gifts. I tell you that without being obliged to travel so far as they did, you may find Him in your midst; for there indeed He stands! He is to be found in those places and in those conditions of human life where He has no less to suffer and is no less of an Outcast than He was in the stable of Bethlehem. I tell you that these poor people who surround you, whose glance meets yours, and still more those whom you see not, who cannot come within your reach, are for *you*, that very JESUS CHRIST to whom the Magi, and to whom the Shepherds brought gifts: the former of their gold and frankincense, the latter of the produce of their fields. I would remind you that it is an Article of the Faith that what you give to the poor you give to Jesus Christ; and I will venture to add, a gift of greater acceptance,

when it passes through the hands of the poor than were you to place it directly in the Hands of Jesus Christ Himself!

And what a source of confidence! These same riches, I say, dangerous obstacles as they prove to your salvation, and so obnoxious to its precepts, may henceforth be enjoyed by you, not only without harm, but to your soul's health. Henceforth they are no more under the ban pronounced upon them in Holy Scripture. Henceforth they will no longer clash with the poverty of Jesus Christ, seeing that, on the contrary, they form the supplement and supply the lack of that straitened lot chosen by Him; for Jesus Christ now enters with you into a holy partnership, becoming enriched by your wealth, as you are endowed with His merits. Hallowed by this mutual ownership, their nature, so to speak, becomes transformed; the Mammon of Unrighteousness itself supplying precious material for Charity, that most excellent of all virtues!

Those terrible anathemas launched by the Son of God in the Gospel against riches shall pass you by.

How can that be? you ask. Because, replies Saint Chrysostom, our Lord Jesus Christ is too faithful and too true to utter maledictions against wealth which has been consecrated to Himself, and which He solicited at your hands.

"Blessed is the man," exclaims the Prophet-King, "that comprehendeth the mystery of the poor and needy," words which I can make use of with greater force and with better reason than he, because it is especially for the Christian that the Poor are a Mystery of Faith. But striking at the root of the matter I add: Blessed is the man that considereth the mystery of a GOD poverty-stricken and of no importance! *Beatus qui intelligit.** Blessed he that comprehendeth this!

And because He humbled Himself, says Saint Paul, God, in order that He might highly exalt Him, wills that at His Name all the world shall bow the knee. And where, if not at the Courts of Kings, can Saint Paul's aspiration find its most sublime fulfilment, seeing that the Powers of this world to whom our respect is due, possess a most gracious aptitude for doing honour to this MAN who is also GOD, but Who for our sake made Himself of no reputation? Herein, as says Saint Chrysostom, does He receive compensation for the indignities of His birth.

I know right well, and it is true, of course, that He is represented to us in the Scripture even from the day of His birth as persecuted by Herod and owning allegiance to Augustus. There we see our religion in its small beginning; but thanks be to God's providence, the world has

* Ps. xli. 1.

undergone a mighty change since then! For, to my own consolation, To-Day I see the greatest of all the Kings of the earth owning allegiance to JESUS CHRIST, and furthering with all his power the reign of JESUS CHRIST! Now, this I call not the Progress of our Religion, but its Consummation and its Crown!*

In order to bring this about, there was need, SIRE, of a Monarch as powerful and as absolute† as yourself. As, on the one hand, there has never been a Prince so happy in the obedience and service rendered him as is your Majesty,‡ so, on the other, there has never been a Prince so blessed by Heaven with those talents and graces

* The Kingdoms of this world have in fact become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; as the Coronation Service of their Kings testifies: a fact which unbelief should note and explain.—TR.

† "It will be seen by what we have stated that the exercise of absolute authority gradually made the French monarch more daring in the use of his despotic power."—*Life and Time of Louis XIV.* (JAMES) vol. ii. p. 307, London, 1831.

‡ "The peace of Nimèguen, 1678, which Louis thus dictated to Europe, raised him to his highest point of power and glory. It was now that the admiring citizens of Paris solemnly decreed to him the title of "the Great," and erected in his honour the two triumphal arches called Porte St. Martin and Porte St. Denis, which still adorn the capital. His courtiers worshipped him as a demi-god; foreign governments regarded him with servile awe. . . ."—*Student's France*, chap. xix., section 10 (JERVIS).

Charles II., King of England, was at this time in the pay of Louis XIV. He had sold himself for a pension of 200,000 livres!

which fit him to render on *his* part and in his Kingly rank, obedience and service to God.*

Now, *your* good fortune, SIRE, lies in your never having attempted to render that obedience and service without palpable success; while *my own* (in this position which I have now occupied so long) consists in ever discovering fresh grounds for congratulating you thereupon. It is this fact which has caused your Majesty's Sacred Person to become the object of such abundant benedictions — benedictions which are looked upon as the marvels of our Age.

Boast is often made in our hearing of the reign of Augustus Cæsar (under whom Christ was born) as an epoch-making reign; but placing it in the light of a parallel which it would be easy for me to draw, I find nothing in it (apart from that) worthy of being compared with Your Majesty's present Reign.

The prosperity with which God has crowned you has been attributed to those Kingly virtues and heroic parts which have so highly distinguished you among all the Sovereigns of Europe; but I for one, taking a wider view, look upon that prosperity as a splendid reward for the zeal shown by Your Majesty in the interests of true religion; your vigour and firmness in repressing heresy, in extirpating error, in

* See Appendix.

ending schism, and re-establishing uniformity in the worship of God.*

Was it possible for Your Majesty to have furnished us at home, as well as to the whole of Europe, more conclusive evidence of this than you have done by means of that most sacred of all treaties which remains as a monument of your piety? †

Your Majesty has surrendered without a pang your own interests;‡ but can it be said that you have sacrificed those of God? Touched on behalf of your people,§ you were ready and willing to end a war which has been simply one

* Revocation of Edict of Nantes, October 17, 1685!! Error of conscience.

† The date of the first treaty of Ryswick, 1697, best fits in with the indications to be read between the lines of this discourse. Bourdaloue has occupied his position "for a long time," he being then sixty-six years of age, and Louis six years younger. It was a treaty which secured peace to the closing years of the seventeenth century.

‡ See Postscriptum.

§ "France restored Nice (which she finally recovered in 1860) to the House of Savoy, with all its other conquered possessions; to *Spain*, Catalonia; she likewise surrendered Luxembourg, and the towns of Charleroi, Mons, Ath, and Cambrai: to the Emperor Leopold all her acquisitions made since the Treaty of Nimèguen, *i.e.* Friburg, Brisach, and Philisburg, and other towns and fortresses on the right bank of the Rhine; but Strasburg was ceded to Louis in free sovereignty; . . . *but so wretched was the condition of the French people at that moment*, that peace had become an absolute necessity."—See *Student's France*, chap. xix., section 17, *near the end.*

series of successes, and in so doing to give up your rights; but has it ever been possible to impose upon you the slightest relaxation of your zeal in any enterprise, as religiously conceived as it has been generously carried out, which made for the interests of God? Notwithstanding the negotiations of so many assembled States, and in spite of every effort of worldly policy, your zeal, SIRE, for the Catholic Faith has triumphed, and your great work in the extinction and abolition of schism, has not only endured, but has been consolidated.*

With this reservation, Your Majesty has shown yourself docile and tractable in every particular; but whenever religion has been involved, you have been inflexible. Wherefore, O Lord—such is my prayer to God—do Thou prolong the days of this mighty King. *Dies super dies Regis adjicies!* Thou shalt grant the King a long life, *et annos ejus usque ad in diem generationis et generationis.*† That his years may endure throughout all generations.

But I am not reduced to the necessity of breathing mere aspirations in this particular. Henceforth my hopes are realized, and the prayers I have offered to God a hundred times

* Conscience needs enlightenment. St. Paul thought he ought to persecute the Christians.

† Ps. lxi. 6.

seem to me, without forecasting the future, to have been already heard.

For since the establishment of the Monarchy, not one of our Sovereigns has reigned both so long and so successfully as Your Majesty * has done.

Happily for France, not only does Your Majesty still occupy the throne, but we possess guarantees so trustworthy as almost to amount to certainties that you will reign until that holy petition shall have been fulfilled in your case more conspicuously than it has ever been in that of any other Monarch; *Dies super dies Regis adjicies!* Grant the King a long life! Never before, since the foundation of the Monarchy, has any King beheld within the august circle of his family so many generations and degrees of relationship as your Majesty to-day beholds in yours.

Without claiming to be either Oracle or Prophet, I venture to forecast for Your Majesty —at all events, I will dare to hope it—a future which shall outshine the past, that you shall one day behold the fruit of the happy marriage which has just been solemnized † and which is

* Louis XIV. reigned seventy years. He died, aged seventy-seven, 1st September, 1715. Excluding his minority, Queen Victoria reigned longer.

† That of the Duke of Burgundy (cir. 1696), grandson of Louis XIV., pupil of Fénélon, "Monseigneur," son of the Dauphin, married at the age of thirteen, to the daughter of

destined to extend your life to a new generation, *Et annos ejus in diem generationis et generationis!* His years shall endure throughout all generations!

After so many glorious victories, these, SIRE, are the unalloyed blessings which you shall henceforth enjoy: at home, Profound Peace, a faithful people, loyal to your every wish; a Court without factions, and submissive to your will, careful to render you its homage and to be deserving of your goodwill; a Royal Family knit together in an unbroken union which is probably without precedent, and which nothing can impair; a Son, who is a worthy successor to your Throne;* a Grand-Son, whose character, moulded by yourself, has been already matured under your hand;† a Princess, his wife, who is

the Duke of Savoy, aged eleven. He died in 1712, within a week of his wife, whose grace had made her the idol of the King, and of the whole Court. Their eldest child, the Duke of Britany, died about a month afterwards! *Sic transit.*

* "Monseigneur" (title of the Dauphin, or eldest son of Kings of France), "imitated his father's conduct, asserting himself as much as was necessary, but never rashly; affable to all; generous towards his soldiers. The King enjoyed unmixed happiness in having a son who imitated without supplanting him, and who won the love of everybody without becoming the object of his father's jealousy." VOLTAIRE, *Siècle de Louis XIV.* Alas! this promising young prince died, in 1711, some six years before the King his father!

† The Duke of Burgundy, already mentioned, who—too terrible to tell!—together with his young wife and infant son, died of fever within a few days of each other, all three sharing

your consolation and your joy; young princes, on whom you are justified in building all your hopes, and who already are fulfilling to the letter your anticipations for their future.

These, I repeat, are the gifts of God which he designed for you, *Ecce sic benedicetur homo qui timet Dominum.** Thus, reasoned David, shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord; thus, therefore, hath Your Majesty been blessed!

Yet once more, O our God! it is for this very cause that Thou dost multiply the days of this august Sovereign, and dost preserve his life—not for our sakes only, but for Thine own!—for with soul so great, religion so pure, wisdom so enlightened, and power so absolute, what may he not accomplish on Thy behalf after all that *Thou* hast done for *him?* What return will he hesitate to make in acknowledgment of the inestimable benefits which Thou hast already showered upon him?

I would fain be permitted, O Lord, to spend my concluding words in conveying to him here

the one tomb (1682–1712). He left a son two years old, great grandson of Louis, who afterwards became Louis XV. Their Funeral Oration, which will be found in the succeeding volume of this series, was pronounced by DE LA RUE. Bourdaloue was mercifully spared the knowledge of these awful tragedies, which destroyed the fair prospect on which he evidently loved to dwell. He died in 1704.

* Ps. cxxviii. 4.

my congratulations upon Thy divine protection. I would say to him as was said by one of Thy Prophets to a Prince far less worthy of such a wish: "*O King live for ever!*" Live! Live! SIRE, under the good hand of God the All-Merciful and the All-Mighty, who never has forsaken you and who never will!

Live for the comfort and consolation of your Subjects, and to lay the top-stone of your glory! Or, rather, seeing that you are the man of God's right hand, Live, O SIRE! Live for the glory and for the interests of God! Live that you may extend the knowledge, the worship, and the service of God! Live for the consummation of that great enterprise—the restoration of unity to the Church of God!

Live for the destruction of unrighteousness, of error, and of profligacy—the foes of God!

Live like a Christian King, and thereby merit that everlasting salvation which God our Saviour proclaims by His coming into the world, and which is the Reward of the Elect!

That it may be yours, I pray, through JESUS CHRIST! AMEN.

POSTSCRIPTUM

LAST HOURS OF KING LOUIS XIV

"In the month of August, 1715," some eighteen or nineteen years after listening to this discourse, a period long enough to darken its bright forecast, and six after the death of the Great Preacher and faithful adviser who delivered it, "Louis was seized with a painful disease. . . . The great agony that he suffered prevented him from sleeping, and reduced his once robust frame far more than age had been able yet to do. For some weeks this continued, but during the whole of that time, though he never went out, he transacted the business of the State without the slightest abatement of his labours. He in no degree concealed his illness or its probable termination, conversing with his ministers and his courtiers upon his approaching death, and holding long conversations with the Duke of Orléans on the future government of the Kingdom. But he mastered, as far as possible, every expression of pain, and displayed to the last that kingly courtesy to all who approached him, for which he had been famous through life.

"One of the last and perhaps the finest traits of Louis's domestic character showed itself two days before his death, and after he had received Extreme Unction. While conversing with his confessors upon the awful moment before him he perceived by the reflection of a mirror that two of his servants at the foot of the bed were in tears, and turning to them he asked, "Why do you weep? Did you think I was eternal? I never thought it, and at my age you should have prepared yourselves to lose me."

"Not long before his death, Louis sent for the boy who was to succeed him, and holding him in his arms, addressed to him words which in every respect were remarkable. What he had said and written on other occasions may have been composed for the eyes of the world . . . but in his address to Louis XV., as he held him in his arms for the last time, a boy of five years, he showed the magnanimity of acknowledging faults. Many a man will look calmly upon death who would fain turn away his eyes from the evil he has committed. His words, as they remained for years written above the pillow of Louis XV., were as follows :

"You are soon about to become the King of a great Kingdom. That which I recommend to you more strenuously is never to forget your obligations towards God. Remember that you owe Him everything that you are. Strive to

preserve peace with your neighbours. I have been too fond of war. Never imitate me in that, nor in the too great expenses which I have incurred. Seek counsel in everything, and endeavour to find out the best, always to follow it. Lighten the burdens of your people as soon as you can, and do what I myself have had the misfortune not to be able to do."

JAMES.

ADDENDA

Note to p. 102.—We might accuse Bourdaloue of unreality or exaggeration when he asserts that some of the Grand Ladies of his day expected some consideration at God's hands on account of their Social Position! The following chance paragraph shall acquit him on this score: "Do they think that God is an easy-going, indulgent Father, or do they think that He is arbitrary or capricious in His judgments? Do they imagine that He can be hoodwinked by specious vows and promises? Do they suppose, like our Countess of the Old Régime, that *le bon Dieu* would think twice before condemning a person of quality? . . ."* There is banter in this; but it is a sign of those times!

Page 250.—"Selfishness will undo any man or body-corporate of men, and it must finally undo Satan himself." I might have said that it has undone him already! He judged Our Lord by himself. He couldn't believe, as he showed when he appeared against Job, in simple goodness for goodness' sake, and that was his ruin. He mistook the Sign of the Cross and the signs of that gloomy Afternoon on Calvary. Bad generalship! It was his Waterloo, and worse!

Page 321.—God mercifully spared his venerable

* "The Wayfarer," *Church Times*, August 5, 1904.

servant the bitter lot of mourning publicly the blight and ruin of the prospect he himself had painted, and the blasting of all the Nation's fondest hopes—mourning whose pathetic note is heard throughout the eloquent pages of Massillon's Funeral Oration.

The Great Preacher died in May, 1704, so that he did not even live to hear the terrible news of BLENHEIM, fought on August 2 of the same year. This brilliant victory of Marlborough's was the first great blow to the French supremacy.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

FORTHCOMING VOLUMES.

III. FAMOUS FUNERAL ORATIONS.

With Historical and Biographical Notices.

I. **PRINCESS HENRIETTA OF FRANCE.** (BOSSUET.) **Queen Consort of Charles I. of England.** Full of historical interest.

II. **PRINCESS HENRIETTA OF ENGLAND.** (BOSSUET.) **Daughter of King Charles I. and Queen Henrietta; Duchess of Orleans.** Bossuet's masterpiece.

III. **THE DAUPHIN, HIS WIFE, AND CHILD.** (DE LA RUE.)

IV. **LOUIS THE GREAT (XIV.).** (MASSILLON.)

IV. EASTER, ASCENSION, AND WHITSUNTIDE.

I. **"THE LORD'S DAY."** (DE LA BOISSIÈRE.)

II. **"ABIDE WITH US."** (DE LA BOISSIÈRE.)

III. **FAITH (St. Thomas).** (VINET.)

IV. **FAITH—continued.** (VINET.)

V. **ASCENSION: An Evidence of the Truth of Doctrine.** (VINET.)

VI. **WHITSUNTIDE.** (VINET.)

V. SAINTS'-DAY SERMONS.

I. **ST. PAUL: His Work and His Weakness.** (BOSSUET.)

II. **ST. ANDREW: or, The Triumph of the Impossible.** (BOSSUET.)

III. **ST. MARY MAGDALENE: Love Penitent; Love Grateful.** (BOURDALOUE.)

IV. **THE SAINTS' EXAMPLE: "They were Saints because they did their Duty."** (BOURDALOUE.)

V. **THE SAINTS' REWARD: "Sure; Abundant; Everlasting."** (BOURDALOUE.)

This Volume formed a memorial to Queen Victoria, and contains a personal reminiscence and visit to the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS AND TRINITY-TIDE.

VOL. I.

LENT AND HOLY WEEK.

PRESS NOTICES.

"Showing the clergy that to be devout is not necessarily to be dull."—*Scotsman.*

"English readers are provided in this excellent translation with a literary treat."—*T.P.'s Weekly.*

"Noble utterances of men who united in their hearts a zeal for their king, their country, and their God."—*The Guardian.*

THE DEAN OF YORK: "The vivacity and eloquence of an harangue in French are most successfully rendered in an English translation."

Former Volumes published in handy size for Pocket and Pulpit

BY

W. WALKER, 28, PATERNOSTER ROW.

VOL. I. (BOURDALOUE.) 2*s*. net.

HOME THRUSTS: Married Life; Care of Servants; Mischief Making and Mischief Mending.

II. THE PASSION OF OUR LORD. (BOSSUET.) 1*s*. net.

III. PEACE. (DE LA BOISSIÈRE.)

RELIGION AND MORALS. (BOURDALOUE.) 1*s*. 6*d*. net.

IV. BOSSUET'S DEFENCE OF THE LIBERTIES OF THE GALLICAN CHURCH, A.D. 1682. 1*s*.

BISHOP MANDELL CREIGHTON wrote: "Examples of noble oratory and lofty teaching."

A very effective Three Hours' Service for Good Friday (DE LA BOISSIÈRE) is published with alternative List of Hymns from A. & M. and Church Militant Hymns, together with Short Lessons, Collects, and Addresses :—

THREE SCENES FROM THE PASSION.

I. Gethsemane. II. Jerusalem. III. Mount Calvary.

1*s*. net.

1700